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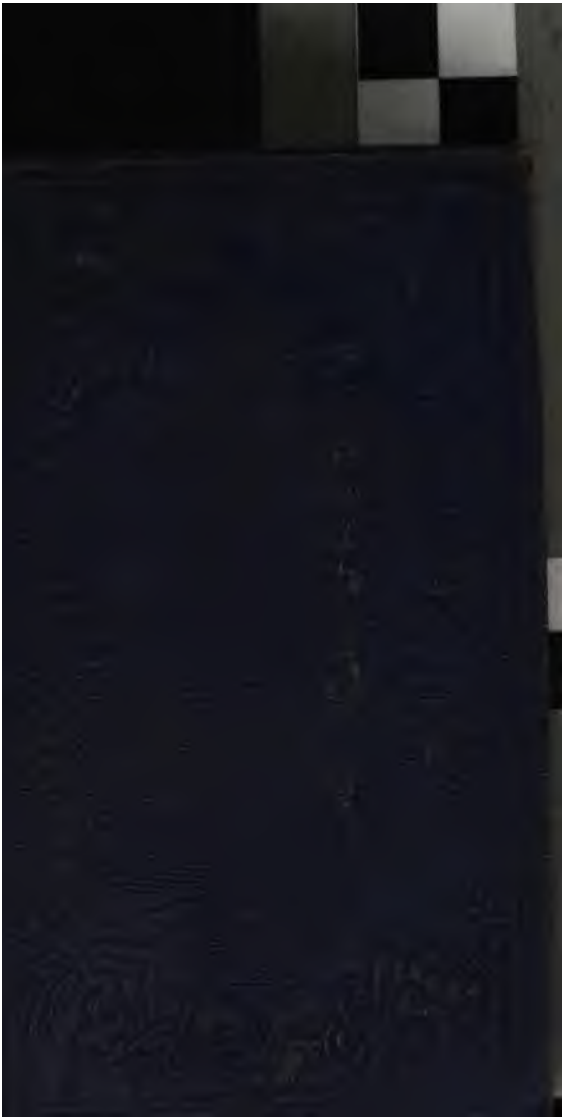
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To the Bodleian Library, Ash Wednesday, 1917; E. S. Dodgson.

BOGATZKY'S

GOLDEN TREASURY.

EVENING.

FOR THE

CHILDREN OF GOD:

CONSISTING OF

SELECT TEXTS OF THE BIBLE, WITH DEVOTIONAL AND PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS, FOR EVERY EVENING IN THE YEAR.

BY C. H. V. BOGATZKY.



BODLEIAN
22 NOV 1971
OXFORD

PREFACE.

HAVING, soon after the publication of my first pieces, felt a lively sense of the Divine influence, and having received assurances from different persons, that the blessing of God had attended them; I was thereby encouraged, by the sensible guidance of Heaven, to proceed in labours of the same kind, and apply my little time and ability to the eternal benefit of myself and others.

I have not acted in this, merely from the impulse of my own will and judgment; but have waited upon the Lord, in prayer and supplication, and God hath been pleased from time to time to grant me the aid of such intimations, as friends both at home and abroad could furnish, towards some further useful undertaking.

Being thus assured of the blessing of God in Christ upon all my writings, and having found them nourishing to my own soul, and edifying to others; I am perfectly content, though they should not suit the corrupt taste of many, and should be misrepresented and ridiculed by more. This will not affect either me or my writings. I rather rejoice that the Lord hath chosen me, unworthy as I am, for an object of reproach, and hath set an additional seal upon my poor writing, which assures me, that he will continue henceforward to bless them more and more. The first work I published during my academical studies was, the well-known Treasury. This harmless little *book, written* with great simplicity, underwent



much severe censure, and was stigmatised by various ludicrous appellations. But this, instead of hindering, promoted the success of it. The demand for it has increased to such a degree, that the twenty-third edition is now in the press;* and it has been translated into several foreign languages. I do not make a merit of this to myself, which would be an abomination in the sight of God; but declare it to his praise and glory, and mention it for the comfort of those who are hated and ridiculed by the world for the truth's sake. It may serve to convince them, that our God regards not the judgment of men; the contempt, scorn, reproach, and ridicule of the world, does not cause him to withdraw his blessing; but on the contrary he will continue to fulfil the words, 1 *Cor.* i. 28. "Base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are."

I can therefore preserve my tranquillity, amidst this unavailing reproach of the world, forasmuch as nothing strange or uncommon has befallen me. Have the writings of the most faithful servants of God ever met with a better fate, when they have borne testimony against the sins prevailing among different ranks of men, and especially among men of the gravest profession? How then could I expect that my weak and inconsiderable testimony should be exempt from the reproach of the world, or entitled to the good-will and praise of mankind? The world loves only its own. But how contemptible soever these ascetic pieces, written for edification, may appear to the learned at present, or however that contempt may increase with the further corruption of taste; yet a time will come, when posterity will know how to make use of these and the like testimonies borne to the truth. Let the faithful servants of God endeavour, by their conversation and writings, to serve both the present and future

* *It is impossible to calculate* the number of editions *which have since appeared.*



ves, in extending the kingdom of God, and their writin
ll not perish: whereas the works of those who seduc
en from the truth, and from the power of godliness, wi
scattered as chaff before the wind. Right will no
ase to be right, truth will continue to be truth, and all
ous hearts will adhere to it. While contentious men
rplex and obscure the truth, the faithful witnesses of it
ll disentangle and place it in the clearest light. "For
ter light cometh night, but vice shall not prevail against
isdom." *Wisdom*, vii. 30.

Having therefore, as I mentioned before, perceived the
racious aid and guidance of Almighty God, seconding
e in all my labours, I must affirm the same of this se-
nd part of the Golden Treasury. The occasion of the
ork was this: I was requested last year by a person of
ity, to write an appendix to the little Treasury, for the
of young persons, and to guard them against too
at security as well as indifference in religion. The
e person proposed to take 600 copies, and to bind them
long with the Augsburg confession, of which he had
ed an edition to be printed of the same size, in order
to circulate it the better. He soon after advanced
money for the purpose, and pressed me to the un-
ing. As I could not decline so pious a request, I
out the work immediately. But the numbers in-
l upon me so fast, amidst such abundance of mat-
t I choose to publish them, not by way of appen-
as a second part of the said little Treasury, for
of young persons. When it was offered for sale,
nd for it was considerable; but a hint was given
uld be much greater if it were a second part of
n Treasury. I was therefore requested to un-
e work. Being just then at leisure, I had be-
Lord that he would be pleased to give me a
imation what to do, if it were his pleasure to
life, and if he thought me worthy of his ser-

I considered the application made to me a call n Heaven. The Lord heard my prayer, and with the istance of his grace I soon finished the work.

As to the arrangement of this second part of the Gold- Treasury, it contains as many pieces as there are days the year. The texts are not ranged alphabetically, ut in the order of the books of Scripture, and I have se- ected from each book the passages which appeared to me he most striking, and which, except here and there one, are not to be met with in the former part.

I have placed the day of the month at the top of each page, that the devout reader may have recourse to it daily for his evening meditation, as the first part was designed for the morning. For as it is of the highest use to make the word our food betimes in the morning, and to draw sustenance from it throughout the day: so it is equally necessary to nourish and strengthen our souls in like manner in the evening. The main subject of the book refers constantly to Christ, the Lamb of God, though not always in express terms; and as under the Old Testament the perfect offering of atonement was prefigured by the sacrifice of a lamb every morning and evening, so it becomes us to think upon Christ, the Lamb of God, and his infinitely meritorious sacrifice for sin, night and morning. And, as in the Jewish temple, the lamps on the golden candlestick were cleansed and supplied with fresh oil each morning and evening, that the fire might never be extinguished, so it is necessary, agreeably to this type, that we should daily purify our lamps and supply them with oil. And this effect is produced by the word of God and by prayer.

The heads of Christian families may draw from hence the subject of a short evening meditation; or they may only read these, and form their prayers upon them. And to make it the more suitable to the devotion of the even- *ing, I have frequently alluded* to that part of the day in

the remarks or prayers subjoined to each text. I have besides, here and there, recommended self-examination and preparation for a happy death. What can be more interesting, before we retire to rest, than to examine ourselves, how we have spent the day, and to remember and prepare for our latter end? for many of us lie down to rest, and rise no more. I have likewise taken every occasion, as far as my narrow limits would permit, to treat of the genuine means of salvation, of repentance and faith, or a true conversion, so as not to deprive the penitent of the comforts which he may need; nor to administer false comfort to the presumptuous, but to excite them to true repentance.

And as our God himself is at this time preaching repentance, by the means of his extraordinary judgments, both spiritual and temporal, particularly by the terrible earthquakes, and the bloody wars which followed them, and as we know not what greater judgments may still be in store for the latter times; I have therefore taken such occasions as were offered by the words before me, to consider those judgments of God as the signs of our days, and by entering into his holy designs to hint at such particular sins as prevail in the present age.

The principal sins of our days are, libertinism and contempt of the word of God; whence arises that perpetually increasing spirit of injustice, that general security, carelessness and luxury, as if no danger were impending. But the heaviest of the divine judgments in that unhappy falling off in the ministry and among those who are candidates for it, by which God converts sin itself into an instrument of punishing sin; when men who are secure in their sins, fall into the hands of teachers, whom they follow, with itching ears; as he threatened judicially to punish the disobedient and the scorners, by "raising up such shepherds in the land, as visit not their flock," Zech. xi. 16. *But we read* in ver. 17. "Woe to the idol shepherd,



that leaveth the flock; the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye," &c. Now the great temporal judgments of Heaven are intended to punish these sins, and to prevent the greater spiritual judgments. We may observe this in our Protestant church, which it is certainly the design of God to purge and cleanse, as his threshing floor, at this time.

According to the words of Christ, it is an instance of true wisdom, and our duty to take heed to the signs of our times, and to be awakened by them to repentance, confirmed in the faith, and prepared for all future events. For this purpose may the Lord give a blessing to this work for his name's sake. Amen.

C. H. v. BOGATZKY.

Halle, March 18th. 1760.

A GOLDEN TREASURY.

EVENING.

JANUARY 1.

And God said, Let there be light.—Gen. i. 3. *See also* 2 Cor. iv. 6. *God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts.*

We are, by nature, full of spiritual darkness, even as the formless earth was dark before the creation of light. Is it not therefore necessary that God should powerfully command a new creation within us, and enlighten us through his Spirit, by the means of his word? Examine thyself, O my soul! Hath this new creation, this new birth and illumination, taken place in thee? Thou art now concluding the first day of this new year; how soon mayst thou conclude the last day of thy life! Unless thou art regenerated and enlightened by divine grace, thou wilt sink into everlasting darkness, and endure the second death. Alarming thought! "Awake, therefore, thou that sleepest," &c. Enlighten me, O my God, that I may truly repent of my folly and sins, and contemplate in the approaching exercises of faith, thy love and mercy in Christ Jesus. May I ever walk in the light, as a child of light; that when I arrive at the dark valley of the shadow of death, I may fear no evil.

Lord, while the frame of nature stands,
Thy praise shall fill my tongue;
But the new world of grace demands
A more exalted song.



And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh. And Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.—Gen. iv. 3, 5, 9.

ACCORDING to the fifth verse, every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is evil and corrupt. Is not this strongly evinced, when men continually resist those divine influences which can alone produce repentance! God often gives us sufficient time and leisure, upon the misuse of which he frequently inflicts temporal and eternal punishment on the impenitent. However decent our temporal behaviour may be, we must all be regenerated, and shew it by new obedience: we must receive a different spirit from that which animates the men of this world, or be lost for ever. And is not this possible? Did not Noah walk with God, in times of abounding iniquity? We, as Christians, should daily confess the iniquity of our hearts, and suffer the Spirit of God to correct us. Lord, grant that the conclusion of this day may conclude the carnality of my mind, and that to-morrow I may begin a new life. Pardon all my sins for Christ's sake, and grant that I may suffer thy Spirit to rebuke me, and never strive against its divine influence.

Our breath is forfeited by sin,
To God's avenging law;
We own thy grace immortal King,
In every gasp we draw.

And God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.—Gen. vi. 12. *See also* Matt. xxiv. 38, 39.

MANKIND, before the second coming of the Son of man, are described by the situation of the antediluvians. It is true there is no gross vice imputed to them; we only read, that they were carnal, intent upon eating, drinking, and marrying—upon the present, not upon a future life; and regarded not the warnings of God; consequently were secure and negligent of their immortal souls. The deluge came, and with extensive devastation swept them all away. Are not men of the present age equally careless, intent only upon the present life, and the momentary pleasures thereof, and regardless of the divine warnings and calls to repentance? Hence the judgments which arise from time to time, when God punishes the earthly carnal mind with fire and sword, and makes the thoughtless tremble with fear. Lord, enable us to repent this very evening, and guard us against that fatal security; that we may provide rather for the life to come than for the present, and not despise the warning of thy word.

The Lord, from his celestial throne,
Look'd down on things below,
To find the man that sought his grace,
Or did his justice know.

By nature all are gone astray,
Their practice all the same;
There's none that fears his Maker's hand,
There's none that loves his name.



And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle, insomuch that they experienced his gracious remembrance, for he made a wind to pass over the earth, and the water assuaged.—Gen. viii. 1.

God is ever mindful of his children, though despondency seizes them in their distress, and they often imagine that he has forgot them. "It was thus," said Luther, "that Noah perceived God had not forgotten him, after he had been tossed about upon the water near half a year, without comfort, and it seemed to Noah as though God had forgotten him." Though God seems to have forgotten us, let this be our comfort, that others among the faithful have shared the same fate, as indeed the whole church says, "God hath forgotten to be gracious." But he cannot forget us; for he hath deeply engraven us on the palms of his hands; and the time will come when his gracious remembrance will be fully evidenced. Yes, my God, dost thou take care for oxen, how much more wilt thou think upon me? O think upon us this evening according to thy great mercy, wash away our sins with the blood of Christ, and cause the waters of trouble and temptation to assuage in thy due time.

Above the heaven's created rounds,
Thy mercies, Lord, extend:
Thy truth outlives the narrow bounds
Where time and nature end.

Safety to man thy goodness brings,
Nor overlooks the beast;
Beneath the shadow of thy wings
Thy children choose to rest.

ar not, Abraham; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. Fear not, for I am with thee, and I will bless thee.—Gen. xv. 1. xxvi. 24

IPTUROUS minds desire exemption from fear, d wish for nothing but unalloyed transport. ıt Abrabam, the father of the faithful, and Jab, and even Paul and John in the New Testaıt, were subject to fear. Else why should ıd tell them, "Fear not?" Now the fear ıich believers sometimes experience, should t render their faith suspected. We should .ke use of our fear as an impulse to our attenıce on the word, on prayer, and on Christ; d firmly believe that the Lord will be our .eld and our reward, and will always be with and bless us. My Redeemer, be thou my eld against all my enemies, enable me to ht against them faithfully and victoriously, l bless my sincere labours in thy vineyard, ıt after the evening of this life is past, thou yest be eternally my exceeding great reward. ıy we seriously remember that evening now, l by repentance, flowing from true faith, pre-re for it.

The Lord of glory is my light,
And my salvation too;
God is my strength, nor will I fear
What all my foes can do.

When troubles rise and storms appear,
There may his children hide;
God hath a strong pavilion, where
He makes *my* soul abide.

the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham t thing which I do? For I know him, that will command his children and his household ter him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord do justice and judgment; that the Lord may ing upon Abraham that which he hath spoken him.—Gen. xviii. 17. 19. *See also* Amos iii. 7.

D informs his servants of approaching judg- nts, that like Abraham they may pray the re fervently, and admonish their families to the Lord after their death, lest they perish in judgments. For a Christian desires not only save himself, but his whole house, and even all nkind. Let every man, particularly every ster of a family, examine himself, whether h of the same mind as Abraham. O my God nt that I may first fear thee, and keep th mmandments myself; and then admoni ers by word and example, especially those own household, to do the same; and tha pray for them, lest they perish in the sp and temporal judgments now abroad in

son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering. And Abraham called the name of that place, Jehovah-jireh.—Gen. xxii. 8, 14.

E lamb, which Abraham here refers to, was aac, the type of Christ. But when God called him not to slay Isaac (the knife being in his nd,) he lifted up his eyes, and saw a ram ught in a thicket by his horns, and he sacrificed and called the place "The Lord hath seen," *The Lord will provide.* Thus the Lord look- upon all our distress and temptation, and ll provide every thing we need, even though e trial of faith, like that of Abraham, should be rried to the utmost, without any visible way escape. "For God," says Luther, "dwelleth darkness and permits us not to see him in his uncil chamber." The afflictions we behold pending are prevented, and help will arise, nich none could foresee. Our eyes therefore ust be shut, and the eyes of God will be open on us. He has already provided and given us e true Lamb for an offering; how shall he not ith him also freely give us all things needful r our souls and bodies? Lord, grant me the ith and obedience of Abraham, and the patient signation of Isaac, that in all my necessities I ay say, "The Lord will provide."

The wonders, Lord, thy love has wrought,
Exceed our praise, surmount our thought;
Should I attempt the long detail,
My speech would faint, my numbers fail.
No blood of beasts, on altars spilt,
Can cleanse the souls of men from guilt;
But thou *hast* set before our eyes,
An all-sufficient sacrifice.



How then can I do this great wickedness, a against God? And it came to pass, as she to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened nc her, to lie by her, or to be with her. And th was with Joseph, even in prison, and that w did the Lord made it to prosper.—Gen. xx 10. 23.

O THAT all persons, particularly young ones of Joseph's mind, and considered sin as a or rather the greatest evil; and might shu only sin, but every occasion of sin! God abundantly bless them and prosper all the dertakings. Lord, preserve me and mine fr allurements to sin. Whenever we are tei to lasciviousness or injustice, pride, anger other sins, let us recollect, "How can I dc great wickedness?" Thus may the fear of secure us from all sin, and then may we pi in whatsoever we do; and be thou present us in suffering, in persecution, and particula death, and safely conduct us through them

In all my vast concerns with thee,
In vain my soul would try
To shun thy presence, Lord, or flee
The notice of thine eye.

My thoughts lie open to the Lord
Before they're form'd within;
And ere my lips pronounce the word,
He knows the sense I mean.

The beams of noon, the midnight hour,
Are both alike to thee:
O may I ne'er provoke that power
From which I cannot flee.

And Joseph nourished his father and his brethren, and all his father's household with bread, according to their families. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you and your little ones. And he comforted them, and he spake kindly unto them.—Gen. xlvii. 12. ch. l. 21.

WITH what heart-cheering comfort will Jesus address and receive us, if we sincerely repent of our sins, as Joseph's brethren did. If the Patriarch provided for his father and his brethren, each according to their families, how much more will our God, who is love itself, and is not, like Joseph, Lord over Egypt, but over the universe, provide for us and our children, however numerous? "We old fools," says Luther, "eat with the children, not they with us." God blesses the parents for the sake of the children, and supplies their wants; for they are employed in his service, and are to train up their offspring, as Christians, for his glory. Will he then suffer them to want necessaries for that purpose? What signify our distrustful cares from morning to night? We should leave our concerns to God; whilst we and our children seek only his kingdom, all other things shall be added unto us. Some cannot sleep for care, but I remember a mother saying, "I lay my cares every night under my pillow; I cast them upon God, and sleep at ease."

My God, how excellent thy grace,
Whence all our hope and comfort springs;
The sons of Adam, in distress,
Fly to the shadow of thy wings.
From the provision of thy house,
We shall be fed with sweet repast;
Their mercy like a river flows,
And brings salvation to our taste.

I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord.—Gen. xlix. 18.

MANY have received comfort from these words in death, and waited in faith for their salvation. The thoughtless and impenitent wait only for temporal prosperity in their lives, and therefore, in the hour of death, cannot expect eternal bliss, but on the contrary, a dreadful judgment. O that they would enter into themselves this very evening, that at the eve of life they might, like Jacob and Simeon, depart in peace. We will not therefore look for any earthly thing but for the Saviour, who is already come, who will grant us his salvation, his aid and deliverance in life and death, and will conduct us safely at last, though we should wait some time for his help. Yes, my Redeemer, they who wait, depend upon, and hope in thee, shall not be ashamed. Grant us only faith and patience, that we may wait upon thee from one morning watch to another; and enduring all things, make the whole course of our lives one perpetual confident expectation of thy aid; and may we ever abundantly experience thy help and salvation, especially at our latter end.

Christ's own soft hand shall wipe the tears
From every weeping eye,
And pains, and groans, and griefs, and fears,
And death itself shall die.

How long, dear Saviour, O how long
Shall this bright hour delay:
Fly swiftly round, ye wheels of time,
And bring the welcome day.

s more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried; and their cry came up unto God, by reason of the bondage. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them.—Exod. i. 12. ii. 23. 25.

THE more we are oppressed by our spiritual and temporal enemies, the more will the kingdom of God increase in and through us. And when distress and danger oppress us most, God hastens to our aid, and makes our necessity itself the means of our relief. For the ways of God are always wonderful. It was an extreme distress, when the children of the Israelites were cast into the river; but this was the means of preserving Moses, their intended deliverer. When Moses came, they were relieved immediately, for their calamities increased. This is God's method. But they cried more unto God, and he relieved them by signs and wonders. After this their distress was greater than ever at the Red Sea. For after God has shewn his glory in assisting us, he can still send greater trials. But when they were beset on all sides by distress and death, then came the most glorious succour of all, and their enemies perished in the Red Sea. Lord, suffer us not to despair in any extremity, but enable us to believe and experience, that the greater our distress, the nearer and more glorious will be thy aid, and all our enemies will be consumed as stubble before the devouring flame.

What sinners value, I resign;
Lord, 'tis enough that thou art mine;
I *shall behold thy* blissful face,
And stand complete in righteousness.

And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning. And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste; it is the Lord's passover. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are, and when I see this blood, I will pass over you.—Exod. xii. 10, 11. 13.

WHOEVER would receive Christ, the true passover, must receive him wholly, as the righteousness and holiness of a guilty creature: he must receive with him the bitter seasoning of remorse and repentance, and suffer no leaven of hypocrisy, no reigning sin, to be intermixed; he must gird his loins, keep his feet shod, take a staff in his hand, and hasten away; consider himself as a stranger here, and direct his heart perpetually towards eternal life. He must not relinquish Christ, his strong fortress, nor seek comfort otherwise than in his blood; so will the Lord not suffer the destroyer to enter his house and his heart. Lord Jesus, grant that we may this very evening so receive thee; and sprinkle, O sprinkle our hearts with thy blood, that the enemy may ever pass over us, and no plague come nigh our dwelling.

Lo! the destroying angel flies
To Pharaoh's stubborn land,
The pride and flower of Egypt dies
By his vindictive hand.

He pass'd the tents of Jacob o'er,
Nor poured his wrath divine:
He saw the blood on every door,
And bless'd the peaceful sign.

Lord, if my heart were sprinkled too
With blood so rich as thine,
Justice no longer would pursue
This guilty soul of mine.

...g and confident was Moses, when
thus addressed the departing people of Israel!
it when God said, "Wherefore criest thou
to me?" it is plain that his faith was some-
hat wavering, which occasioned him to cry so
rnestly in his heart to God. "Observe," saith
uther, "the combats, struggles, and cries of
ith in danger and distress, how closely it
eaves to God, and receives from him comfort
d victory." When we are thus possessed of
th and peace, we must nevertheless continue
prayer. Lord, grant us truly to believe, to
y and stand still. But let our most silent
s become a loud and efficacious cry before
. Fight, O fight for us against our enemies,
we may experience thy salvation.

Hark the Eternal rends the sky,
A mighty voice before him goes -
A voice of music to[illegible]

If thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy unto thy enemies. Ye shall serve the Lord your God, and he shall bless thy bread and thy water: and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee. I will send my fear before thee, and will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt come, and I will make all thine enemies turn their backs unto thee.—Exod. xxiii. 22, 25, 27.

If we obey the voice of Christ, in doing all that he hath commanded us, and exclusively serve God, that is, fear, love and trust in him above all things, then will he send his fear before us against all our enemies, both spiritual and temporal, and put them to flight; he will bless us, and take away all sickness from the midst of us. God continues, even at this day, to send his fear before a small army, and render it formidable to his enemies. Lord, grant that we may all acknowledge this; and when our enemies are afraid, may we ascribe it to thee alone, not to ourselves, lest the same fear and terror should befal us.

When God our leader shines in arms,
What mortal heart can bear
The thunder of his loud alarms;
The lightning of his spear?

We fly to our eternal Rock,
And find a sure defence:
His only name our lips invoke,
To draw salvation thence.

Oft has the Lord whole nations blest
For his own church's sake;
The pow'rs that give his people rest
Shall of his care partake.



s that day shall the priest make an atonement for you to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins before the Lord. It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls by a statute for ever. The life of the flesh is the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.—Lev. xvi. 30, 31. xvii. 11.

UR great day of atonement is that on which
rist shed his blood for us on the cross, and
ereby made atonement for us. Now if it was
cessary for the Israelities to afflict their souls
their great day of atonement, how much more
ght we to humble ourselves by unfeigned re-
ntance, if we desire an interest in the propi-
tion made by Christ Jesus? And as they ab-
ined from all labour on that day, when the
gh priest alone was employed, so should we
stain from all our sinful works, and particu-
ly from all self-sufficiency of righteousness,
d seek our salvation only in the meritorious
od of atonement shed by our High Priest; for
e life of our souls is in the blood of Jesus. O
r Redeemer, may we with afflicted souls ever
k our atonement, life, and salvation in thy
od and death; and may we go to rest this
ening, in full confidence that we are pardoned
rough thy blood.

Jesus, my great High Priest, has died,
I seek no sacrifice beside;
His blood did once for all atone,
And now it pleads before the throne.

My Advocate appears on high,
The Father lays his thunder by:
Not all that earth or hell can say
Shall turn my Father's heart away.

It is the burnt-offering, because of the burni
the altar all night unto the morning, and
of the altar shall be burning in it; it sh
be put out.—Lev. vi. 9. 12.

So likewise the seven lamps upon the sev
den candlesticks were never to be extingu
they were to be supplied with oil every m
and evening, and incense was daily to be
The fire of love, with which Jesus offered
for us and reconciled us, hath burned incen
and in like manner the fire of our love and
desire towards Jesus should burn within u
and never be extinct. But it must be
from the altar, and no strange fire; that
our ardour and love must arise from henc
Jesus offered himself for us upon the alta
cross. We must not therefore offer to Go
strange fire of our own merits. Grant me
Jesus, rightly to discern thy ardent eterna
upon the cross, and do thou keep the fire
on my part, and of fervency in prayer, perp
burning within me, and let me never suffe
be quenched. Anoint me therefore daily,
ing and evening, with fresh oil from thy
Spirit, that my lamp may ever burn, and
be ready for thee in my last moments.

Was ever equal pity found,
The Prince of Life resigns his breath,
And pours his life out on the ground,
To ransom guilty worms from death.

In vain our mortal voices strive
To speak compassion so divine:
Had we a thousand lives to give,
A thousand lives should all be thine.

Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.—Lev. xix. 17.

ALTHOUGH brotherly rebuke is very unfashionable, and very seldom received with temper, yet he who neglects to admonish and rebuke his brother, doth not love him, but he is here said to hate his brother, and to suffer sin upon him; that is, he shall be punished for not having admonished and warned his brother. But in order to this, we must first be converted ourselves; and then we read, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Luke xxii. 32. Else our rebuke is merely severe censure, and not the offspring of Christian love. Lord Jesus, do thou convert our own hearts, and amend them first, and then teach us to rebuke our brethren in love, and to receive their rebukes. And grant us all, in this place and this house, to be edified and amended by one another; "For whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge, but he that hateth reproof is brutish." —Prov. i. 12.

My God, accept my early vows,
Like morning incense in thine house,
And let thy nightly worship rise
Sweet as the evening sacrifice.

Watch o'er my lips, and guard them, Lord,
From ev'ry rash and heedless word;
Nor let my feet incline to tread
The guilty path where sinners lead.

O may the righteous when I stray,
Smite and reprove my wand'ring way,
Their *gentle* words, like ointment shed,
Shall never bruise but cheer my head.

At the commandment of the Lord the chil Israel journeyed, and at the commandment Lord they pitched: and in the place wh cloud abode, there the children of Israel their tents. And when the cloud tarri upon the tabernacle many days, then the c of Israel kept the charge of the Lord, and j ed not.—Numb. ix. 17—19.

THUS the spiritual Israelites; they shou anticipate or undertake any thing from the will, lest confusion or disapppointment encompass every path. The unconverted of their own will. How can they succeed are bewildered here, and rush into eternal tion. Even believers, when acting with t intentions, may sometimes anticipate the God, and not wait for his counsel. And Israelites journeyed not, though the cloud many days, and they might imagine they were time on their journey. O my God, grant all things, even in my best works, I may b ed by thine eye, and wait for thy couns calm resignation; may I speak or be silent or rest, when and as thou wilt; then shall ways be blest, and thou wilt never leave n sake me.

My God, the steps of pious men
Are order'd by thy will,
Though they should fall, they rise again,
Thy hand supports them still.

I choose the path of heavenly truth,
And glory in my choice;
Not all the riches of the earth
Could make me so rejoice.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. (He therefore, only is to be worshipped.) And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and thou shalt talk of them, when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.—Deut. vi. 4—7.

THIS is a lesson particularly addressed to parents and heads of families. O that they would this very evening, before they lie down, impress the word of God on the minds of their children and servants, and repeat the same work every morning. "For," says Luther, "they should always inculcate the word of God, and exercise themselves in it, and not suffer their minds to grow rusty and dark, but always keep the word alive and bright in their memories. For the more we handle the word of God, the brighter and fresher it grows. Whereas, if we neglect it, it will soon be forgotten and lose its power." Lord! make thy word to grow in our hearts brighter, more powerful and lively; and grant that we may impress it upon those who belong to us.

Great God, thy glories shall employ
My holy fear, my humble joy:
My lips in songs of honour bring
Their tribute to th' Eternal King.

O tell me, with a gentle voice,
Thou art my God, and I'll rejoice,
Fill'd with thy love, I dare proclaim
The brightest honours of thy name.

Thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. Know therefore, that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him, and keep his commandments to a thousand generations; and repay them that hate him, to their face, to destroy them; he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face.—Deut. vii. 6, 9, 10.

How much more ought Christians to be a holy people! and how much more earnestly ought they to follow after holiness! yet the unhappy world derides holiness. But God is nevertheless true and faithful, and will certainly fulfil his threats against them that hate him, and, affecting thought! it appears that he will not long delay. He will also as surely fulfil all his promises to the faithful, and keep his covenant and mercy; for he remains the eternal and true God, who cannot lie. Lord! let us believe and experience this in our hearts, and be assured this very evening of thy everlasting faithfulness.

The Lord his people loves,
His hand no good withholds
From those his heart approves,
From pure and pious souls:
Thrice happy he,
O God of hosts!
Whose spirit trusts
Alone in Thee.

*iast eaten and art full, then shalt thou Lord thy God, for the good land which iven thee. Lest thine heart be lifted up, thou shalt remember the Lord thy God; he that giveth thee power to get wealth. and, therefore, that the Lord thy God hee not this good land to possess it, for teousness, for thou art a stiff-necked peo-*eut. viii. 10. 14. 18. ix. 6.

ıily are men lifted up when God gives tory, or any spiritual or temporal bless- He strikes our enemies with fear and ınd, sad to tell! we are shamefully in- o ascribe this to ourselves, as if it were power to intimidate the enemy. But ɔon may our triumph and courage be ɔd! In like manner we are apt to forget od, by not being duly thankful for the gs we receive in body and soul. Grant, ! that we may humbly ascribe to thee, thee alone, every blessing we receive, ɔr it be spiritual or temporal, and that we ə heartily thankful to thee at all times, and ılarly this evening.

We bless the Lord, the just, the good,
Who fills our hearts with joy and food:
Who pours his blessings from the skies,
And loads our days with rich supplies.
He sends the sun his circuit round,
To cheer the fruit, to warm the ground:
He bids the clouds, with plenteous rain,
Refresh the thirsty earth again.
'Tis to his care we owe our breath,
And all our near escapes from death;
Safety and health to God belong,
He heals the weak, and guards the strong.

And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul. Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked. Therefore shall ye keep my commandments, which I command you this day, that ye may be strong, and go in and possess the land, whither you go and possess it.—Deut. x. 12. 16. xi. 8.

If the Israelites under the law were under obligations to love the Lord with all their heart and all their soul, and to walk in all his ways, is it not much more the duty and privilege of Christians under the gospel, to walk in all the ways of God; knowing that they are not travelling towards an earthly Canaan, but towards their eternal home in heaven? They advance in the ways of God's commandments, to take possession of that land, and may therefore assure themselves of perpetual victory and complete salvation. Lord! grant that we may heartily cleave to thee, and follow thee in faith and love; that we may not divide our hearts, and be only half Christians, but that all our steps may be one direct course and preparation for heaven. O may we receive continually fresh assurances that we are walking in the right path, and shall arrive at our eternal inheritance in the paradise of unceasing pleasure.

Eternal Sov'reign of the sky,
And Lord of all below,
We mortals, to thy Majesty,
Our first obedience owe.

The poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land. Because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thy hand unto. Thou shalt not wrest judgment, thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift; for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.—Deut. xv. 10, 11. xvi. 19.

O THAT all men, particularly the rich and magistrates, would observe this! Surely all wish, or ought to wish, for a divine blessing in every undertaking, and to reap an abundant harvest of blessings in a future and glorious state of immortality. Let them, therefore, sow a blessed seed; that is, distribute their beneficence to the poor. But some men not only withhold their beneficence, but, shame to human nature, receive gifts. These become blind, and pervert justice. It concerns both magistrates and Christian teachers to consider this. Lord, grant us all benevolent minds; let no one be blinded by gifts to wrest judgment, or pronounce a comfortable absolution, in favour of the impenitent rich; for how shall they be able to stand in the judgment!

Happy is he that fears the Lord,
And follows his commands,
Who lends the poor without reward,
Or gives with lib'ral hands.

As pity dwells within his breast,
To all the sons of need,
So God shall answer his request,
With blessings on his seed.

The Lord thy God will r
phet, from the midst of
According to all that th
thy God in Horeb, &c.—

THE children of Israel
when the law was deliv
lightning, and they were
Moses, "Speak thou wit
but let not God speak
Exod. xx. 19. They n
and begged of Moses t
God accepted their praye
for Christ the true medi
not on their words, but o
sin that was affected, and
for mercy. Thus the f
ceed both our prayers a
for we know not how or
as we ought, and God h
cording to our sense, or t
hearts, but according to
and to the riches of his
cline us to delight in pra
full and filial confidence.
know how to pray, and
ask; let thy Spirit help
ing intercession in our h
sured in faith, that thou
prayer more fully than
gine; we have often e
upon our entreaties that
prayer, he had far excee
wishes.

And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. The word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thine heart, that thou mayest do it. See, I have set before thee, this day, life and good, and death and evil. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you.—Deut. xxx. 6, 14, 15, 19.

If God would circumcise the hearts of the Israelites under the law, so that they loved him with all their hearts; how much more may and will he do the same towards Christians under the gospel! But life and death are likewise set before us, and God calls heaven and earth to record, that no one is excusable, who doth not love him. Fulfil, O Lord! this promise to us also, and to our seed, that through thy grace we may love thee with all our hearts, and so make choice of the good, the life, and the blessing which thou hast placed before us, lest heaven and earth should bear record against us.

The promise was divinely free,
Extensive was the grace,
"I will the God of Abraham be,
And of his num'rous race."

He said, and with a bloody seal,
Confirm'd the word he spoke:
Long did the sons of Abraham feel
The sharp and painful yoke,

'Till God's own Son decending low,
Gave his own flesh to bleed;
And *Gentiles taste the* blessings now,
From the hard bondage freed.

The Lord thy God, he will go before thee, and he will destroy those nations from before thee, and thou shalt possess them; and Joshua he will go before thee, as the Lord hath said. Be strong and of good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them; for the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go before thee, he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.—Deut. xxxi. 3. 6.

MOSES repeats the same words of Joshua in the 7th, 8th, and 23rd verses, and we find them in the 1st chapter of the book of Joshua. Faith, therefore, and a good courage, distinct from presumption, are not so easily acquired, otherwise God would not have given such repeated exhortations to them. But faithful Christians can better apply these words to themselves, and derive comfort from them, than the Israelites: for they are to take possession of the heavenly Canaan, and to combat their spiritual enemies. The Lord will go before us and destroy our enemies. We must, therefore, be of good comfort, and not fear the power and subtlety of our enemies, for these our enemies God certainly will not protect. O my God! do thou inspire us with this courage, and give us assurance, that thou art with us, fightest for us against our enemies, and will at length give a happy issue to all our troubles.

Jesus, the Lord, shall guard me safe
From ev'ry ill design;
And to his heav'nly kingdom keep
This feeble soul of mine.

God is my everlasting aid,
And hell shall rage in vain,
To him be highest glory paid,
And endless praise. Amen.

Ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the rock; his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he. They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children, they are a perverse and crooked generation. Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise?—Deut. xxxii. 3—6.

GOD is true and faithful, and will surely fulfil all his promises as well as his threatenings; but men are faithless and perverse, they keep not the vows they made to God, and thank him not for his gifts and his aid. Should we ever miraculously obtain victory and succour, we give not the glory to God alone, but ascribe it to ourselves, and celebrate our thanksgiving days with balls and plays, with dancing and revelling, and excess. God may well say, "Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise?" Only go to the field of battle; there your mad joy would soon vanish away. Lord, grant that we may thankfully ascribe to thee alone all our victory and every other succour, that we may judge ourselves unworthy of all thy grace and bounty, and give the glory to thee alone. Let us not, by perversely falling away from thee, provoke thee again to withdraw thy benefits, thy victory, thy succour, and thy peace.

Just are thy ways, and true thy word,
Great Rock of my secure abode;
Who is a God besides the Lord?
Or where's a refuge like our God?

God is a King of power unknown,
Firm are the orders of his throne;
If he resolve, who dare oppose,
Or ask him why, or what he does?

The Lord's portion is his people: Jacob is the lo of his inheritance. He led him about, he in structed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth ove her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lor alone did lead him, and there was no strange God with him.—Deut. xxxii. 9—12.

TRUE and faithful Christians are now the genuine people of God. They can apply these words peculiarly to themselves: they are the part, the inheritance, and the property of the Lord Jesus; for they come to him, and are given to him by his Father. He neither can nor will lose them. John vi. 39. He leads us through the wilderness of this world, and gives us not only his law, but his gospel too; he will cover us, as an eagle doth her young, flutter over us, expand his wings, receive and bear us thereon, over calamity and death, into everlasting life. O my Saviour! write these words, for our comfort, in our hearts: grant that we may both believe and experience them; and as thou hast borne us hitherto, so continue to bear us upon thy wings finally through death into eternal life. Amen.

The pity of the Lord,
To those who fear his name,
Is such as tender parents feel;
He knows our feeble frame.

He knows we are but dust,
Scatter'd with ev'ry breath;
His anger, like a rising wind,
Can send us swift to death.

O that they were wise, that they understood this that they would consider their latter end! (when God will punish their disobedience.) For the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants; (then will he bless.) See now that I, even I am he, that there is no God with me; I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand. Therefore, set your hearts unto all the words, &c. For it is not a vain thing for you, because it is your life; and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land, whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.—Deut. xxxii. 29, 36, 39, 46, 47.

O THAT many a secure sinner was wise and would consider what will some time happen to him, particularly at the last, when God will visit his sins! O that man would attribute every succour, every victory to God, and acknowledge that all proceeds from him alone! Else we shall be put to confusion when he shall judge or punish; but he will repent him for his servants, and his word shall not be a vain thing for them, but it will be the life of their body and soul; whereas many, who despise the word of God, shorten even their temporal life. Lord, grant that we may be wise, and have mercy upon us in all thy judgments! Grant that we may attribute every thing to thee, that by a faithful adherence and obedience to thy word, we may enjoy it as our life.

Now in the heat of youthful blood,
Remember your Creator, God;
Behold the months come hast'ning on,
When you shall say, my days are gone.

Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand; and they sat down at his feet; every one shall receive of thy words. Happy art thou, O Israel! who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord! the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency; and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places.—Deut. xxxiii. 3, 29.

How much more happy and glorious are all truly Christian people! How dear to God! Has he not chosen them before all people and nations? They are his saints, whom he sanctifies daily by his Spirit; and they are in his hands, and sit down with Mary at his feet, and hear his gracious words. And they may rest assured that he is their salvation, the Saviour of their soule, their shield, sword, help and victory, so that all their spiritual and temporal enemies must completely fall. O my God! enable us to believe and be comforted by thy promise; and let us, thy beloved and chosen people, hear thy cheering words, continue in thy hand, and obtain a course of victories and blessings.

Great God! attend while Zion sings
The joy that from thy presence springs;
To spend one day with thee on earth
Exceeds a thousand days of mirth.

God is our sun, he makes our day;
God is our shield, he guards our way,
From all th' assaults of hell and sin,
From foes without, and foes within.

All needful grace will God bestow,
And crown that grace with glory too;
He gives us all things, and withholds
No real good from upright souls.

As the Lord commanded Moses his servant, so did Moses command Joshua: and so did Joshua: he left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses. And the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he sware unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them: the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord hath spoken unto the house of Israel: all came to pass. Jos. xi. 15. xxi. 44. 45. and xxiii. 14.

WHOEVER conducts himself, in all respects, according to the rules of Scripture, will find God fulfilling to him all the promises of his word; not one shall fail, or fall to the ground; in like manner, he will fulfil all his threatenings against those who do not keep his word. Lord! assist us, that we may in no respect omit doing that which thou hast commanded, that we may obtain every promised blessing, and incur no curse; and that not a word of thy promises to us may fail, or remain unfulfilled.

Praise to the goodness of the Lord,
Who rules his people by his word;
And there as strong as his decrees,
He sets his kindest promises.

Whence then should doubts and fears arise?
Why trickling sorrows drown our eyes?
Slowly, alas! our mind receives
The comfort that our Maker gives.

The Lord our God is he that hath fought for you. Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God. Else if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, &c. know for a certainty, that the Lord your God will not drive out any of these nations before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides. Behold this day I am going the way of all the earth.—Jos. xxiii. 3. 11—14.

Thus it is, that parents and teachers should admonish their children and congregations before their final departure; and indeed all of us should take heed unto our souls, and rouse ourselves to the most earnest conflict with our spiritual enemies else they will become snares and traps, scourges and thorns to us. But all the succour we receive, every victory, spiritual and temporal, should be ascribed to God; and we should confess, that he hath fought and conquered for us; for if we exalt ourselves, by assuming merit, God will surely suffer us to fall. He will in no respect tolerate pride, because we thereby rob him of his honour. Guard our souls, O Lord! keep us in perpetual conflict with our enemies, and give us true humility.

God of my childhood, and my youth,
The guide of all my days,
I have declar'd thy heavenly truth,
And told thy wondrous ways.

Let me thy pow'r and truth proclaim
To the surviving age,
And leave a savour of thy name,
When I shall quit the stage.

t as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. lnd the people answered and said, God forbid, hat we should forsake the Lord. The Lord our lod will we serve, and his voice will we obey.— os. xxiv. 15, 16. 24.

Joshua made a covenant with the people that ; that they should not forsake the Lord. O r worthy would it be of every teacher or head ı family to make a covenant in time, and es- ially before his latter end, with those belonging ıim, and how becoming would it be in each of m to say, "I and my house will serve the :d!" Yet how often doth it happen, that us parents have children who do not serve the :d, and forsake him still more after their death! ny God, assist me and my house in serving e, the Lord, and far be it from us ever to for- e thee. And should any of my house have al- ly forsaken thee; Lord, bring them back, that ıd mine may be saved at the last decisive day. ınt, therefore, that we may this evening renew covenant with thee, that we may serve thee lingly in all things, and continue faithful to e unto death.

Of justice and of grace I sing,
And pay my God my vows,
Thy grace and justice, heav'nly King,
Teach me to rule my house.

Now to my tent, O God, repair,
And make thy servant wise;
I'll suffer nothing near me there
That shall offend thy eyes.

And also that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And they could not any longer stand before their enemies, whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil.—Judges ii. 10, 14, 15.

This is still the case. When God hath done great things, as he did at the time of the reformation, and in the time of our fathers, then many serve the Lord. But when the old and faithful witnesses depart this life, then another generation arises, who know not the Lord. And it is the highest spiritual judgment when such a depraved generation arises among ministers, or persons intended for the ministry. If these are salt without savour, and yet are protected, then God approaches with his terrible temporal judgments, with war and other plagues; whithersoever men go out, the hand of the Lord is against them for evil. For it is written, "With the froward thou shalt learn frowardness." Lord, grant that our hearts may be duly affected by thy spiritual and temporal judgments, lest we or those belonging to us should be carried away by a perverse generation.

Thy works with sov'reign glory shine,
And speak thy majesty divine:
Let Britain round her shores proclaim
The sound and honour of thy name.

Let distant times and nations raise
The long succession of thy praise;
And unborn ages make my song
The joy and labour of their tongue.

And Samson said, With the jaw-bone of an ass, heap upon heaps, with the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men. And he was sore athirst, and called on the Lord and said, Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant: and now shall I die for thirst, and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised? But God clave an hollow place that was in the jaw, and there came water thereout. Judges xv. 16. 18, 19.

THESE are words of instruction and comfort. Though our enemies, spiritual or temporal, should exult as conquerors, yet they shall be slain. But we must ascribe the glory to God, and not be elated, as it seems Samson was, when he said, "*I* have slain them." If we exalt ourselves, new distresses will befal and humble us, as was the case of Samson, who afterwards said, "Thou hast given this great deliverance." It becomes us, therefore, in every distress, in every struggle, and particularly in that spiritual languor of our souls, to humble ourselves before God, and call upon him, that he may refresh us with the water of life, though our hearts were as hard and as dry as a bone; then we shall overcome all our enemies. Lord Jesus, grant us victory, and keep us in humility. And when thou triest us again, give us grace to pray and call upon thee, that so we may again be refreshed.

Sing to the Lord aloud,
 And make a joyful noise;
God is our strength, our Saviour God:
 Let Israel hear his voice.

But, O! that all his saints
 Would hearken to his voice,
Soon would he *ease their* sore complaints,
 And bid their hearts rejoice.

Whither thou goest, said Ruth, to her mother-in-law, Naomi, *I will go, and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me. All that thou sayest unto me, I will do. So likewise Boaz said to Ruth: I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman.*—Ruth i. 16, 17; iii. 5, 11.

RUTH was a Gentile, and yet manifested such love towards her mother-in-law, and to her God, that God honoured her with a place in the lineage of the Messiah. She was ready to do all that Naomi required of her, and Boaz was ready in return to do all that she required of him. Thus it is, that God rewards faith and obedience. These things are written for the admonition of us all, particularly of young persons. If they are faithful to others, especially to those of their own household, they will certainly experience God to be faithful in return. O my God, grant that we may be faithful to men, but more especially so to thyself, that nothing, not even death, may separate us from thee, that we may sincerely say, "I will do all that thou requirest." So wilt thou in return grant unto us all that we can ask or desire.

Lord, I address thy heavenly throne.
Call me a child of thine;
Send down the Spirit of thy Son
To form my heart divine.

There shed thy choicest love abroad,
And make my comfort strong:
Then shall I say, my Father, God,
With an unwav'ring tongue.

Let not arrogancy come out of your mouth; for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. The Lord killeth and maketh alive, &c. He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness.—1 Sam. ii. 3, 6, 9.

It ill becomes man to be arrogant, and to set up his own judgment against the ways of God, who is a God of knowledge, and by whom actions are weighed. It is observable, how strictly God requires holiness even under the Old Testament; how much more will he now require holiness in those whom he protects! he will keep the feet only of his saints, and the obstinately wicked shall be silent in darkness. Lord, thou killest and makest alive; make us alive, renew and sanctify us, and keep thou our feet, that we may persevere in the paths of faithful obedience, and may shut out from our hearts whatsoever is sinful. O that thy grace might enable us this evening to put away from us every unholy thing and thoroughly reform our conduct.

Is this the kind return,
And these the thanks we owe?
Thus to abuse eternal love,
Whence all our blessings flow!

On us God bids the sun
Shed his reviving rays;
For us the skies their circles run,
To lengthen out our days.

The brutes obey their God,
And bow their necks to men;
But we, more base, more brutish things,
Reject his easy rein.

And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli: and the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision. And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him; (according to ch. ii. he grew before the Lord) and did let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord. And the word of Samuel came to all Israel.—1 Sam. iii. 1, 19, 20. 22.

O THAT all teachers, all candidates for the office, would imitate Samuel, that the same thing might in due proportion be said of them. But how many are there, who content themselves with the shell, instead of the kernel, of divine revelation. They fill only their heads, not their hearts, and never receive the word so as to be fed and nourished thereby. And when this is the case, the word of the Lord will grow scarce. But when no solid nourishment is to be found for the soul, men will grow weary of feeding upon husks; they will hunger after the word of God. And then God will again raise up a Samuel. Lord, make thy word precious to us, and cause us to hunger after it; and send us many such preachers as Samuel, who will not suffer their own souls and those of other men to perish for want of substantial food.

In vain we lavish out our lives
To gather empty wind;
The choicest blessings earth can yield,
Will starve a hungry mind.

Come, and the Lord shall feed our souls
With more substantial meat;
With such as saints in glory love,
With such as angels eat.

glory is departed from Israel, for the ark of od is taken.—1 Sam. iv. 12.

ITUAL judgments were advanced very high he time of Eli the high priest. Hophni and nehas, the sons of Eli, were themselves wick- wretches, and yet Eli regarded them more ı God, and was very blameable for his lenity ards them. Upon this, temporal judgments te in upon them; thirty thousand of the dren of Israel, and among them the two sons li, were slain by the Phillistines, the ark of covenant was taken, Eli broke his neck, the) of Phinehas died of her fright in childbed, she spoke the words above quoted,—"the y is departed," &c. It is observable, that n the spiritual and temporal judgments are ved at their greatest height, they were re- ed, and the glory returned. Samuel preach- he word of God again, and obtained victory r the enemy. The spiritual judgments of l were at a great height before the reforma- ı, and then came Luther. There was a great ing off after this, even at the universities; n God produced many witnesses at once, and vided great help and amendment. If at this e spiritual judgments should increase, and ıporal judgments break upon us, God will ıe us not only one Samuel, but a host of wit- ses; he will cause the light to shine out of kness, and manifest his glory by assisting us. ant therefore, Lord, that we may adhere to thy th, and ever pray for faithful labourers; thou t preserve thy truth, however men may ob- re it.

Fear not, and turn ye not aside, for then shall ye go after vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver, for they are vain. For the Lord will not forsake his people, for his great name's sake, because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people.—1 Sam. xii. 20—22.

THOUGH the people of Israel had sinned against God in desiring a king, yet, when they were affrighted by the voice of the thunder, and penitently confessed their sins, Samuel comforted them, and gave them this admonition. Christians are now the elect people of God. If we commit sin and fall into danger and distress then, if we penitently confess our sins, the Lord will speak to us thus, "Fear not," and we may be assured, that the Lord will not forsake us for his great name's sake. However unworthy we may be, still we are his people and his property which he will powerfully protect. Lord, suffer us not to desert thee any more, but grant that we may serve thee with all our hearts, and not go after vain things, which cannot save us in danger or in death.

Blest are the men who keep thy word,
And practise thy commands;
With their whole heart they seek the Lord,
And serve thee with their hands.

Great is their peace who love thy law,
How firm their souls abide;
Nor can a bold temptation draw
Their steady feet aside.

Then shall my heart have inward joy,
And keep my face from shame,
When all *thy* statutes I obey,
And honour all thy name.

When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made head of the tribes of Israel? wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord? For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry; because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.—1 Sam. xv. 17. 19. 23.

WHEN Saul was little in his own eyes, he obtained favour of God and became a king: as soon as he was elated, and rejected the word of God, by saving what he should have destroyed, he was rejected; because disobedience to God and his word is a very great sin, as great as the sin of witchcraft; for God will support his authority, and enforce his word. O my God, grant that we and our families may be conscientious observers of thy word, and strictly obey thy commandments, lest thou should reject us. Let us not think lightly of any sin, but consider every act of disobedience as the sin of witchcraft, and work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Impress thy holy fear upon our hearts this very evening, that we may never depart from thee, and always continue little in our own sight, and thus preserve us, by thy word and grace, to life everlasting. Amen.

Lord, I would spread my sore distress,
And guilt before thine eyes;
Against thy laws, against thy grace,
How high my crimes arise!

Should'st thou condemn my soul to death,
And crush my flesh to dust,
Heav'n would approve the vengeance well,
And earth must own it just.

Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy se will go and fight with the Philistine. F hath defied the armies of the living God. Lord, that delivered me out of the paw of th and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliv out of hand of this Philistine. To hin David, *Thou comest to me with a sword a shield, but I come to thee in the name of the of hosts, whom thou hast defied.*—1 Sam. xv 36, 37. 45.

DAVID was a type of Christ, who was beset Satan, forty days, as Israel was by Goliah. as the victory of David was the victory ove Israel, so the victory gained by Christ is When therefore Satan steps forth again like a Goliah, let no man's heart fail becau him. We shall overcome him, as Christ with the word of God, which is an infa sling; for a single word will defeat him. have still less reason to let our hearts fail, men step forth, like Goliah, and scorn the vants of God: and though they should ad with sword, and spear, and shield, the fai servants of the Lord will come in the nam the Lord of hosts who is with them, an whom they pray; whereas their enemies ne do nor can pray. Lord, let not our hearts when Satan or man advances like Goliah; arm us with thy word and with prayer, an us ever go on and maintain the victory.

For ever blessed be the Lord,
My Saviour and my Shield,
He sends his Spirit with his word,
To arm me for the field.

s man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy l; but the soul of my lord shall be bound in bundle of life with the Lord thy God; and souls of thine enemies, them shall he sling out, out of the middle of a sling.—1 Sam. xxv. 29.

n men rise up against the servants of God, persecute them, they certainly hurt them-s, and will be cast out, unless they repent. the children and servants of Jehovah are d in the bundle of life with the Lord their ; they cannot be lost, for they are bound fast. He binds them to himself, even to eart, in a beautiful bundle, from which nei-man, nor devil, in any extremity or distress, be able to draw them, nor can they be hurt, hey are carefully deposited, guarded, secure, happy. Lord, save us likewise from all our ies, especially from all sins, from all anger revenge, as thou didst here preserve David igh Abigail. Fight for us against Satan and ir enemies, and binding us fast in thy bundle e, preserve us in thy name and in thy heart. n.

Arise, my gracious God,
And make the wicked flee;
They are but thy chastising rod,
To drive thy saints to thee.

Behold the sinner dies,
His haughty words are vain,
Here in this life his pleasure lies,
And all beyond is pain.

I shall behold the face,
Of my forgiving God;
And stand complete in righteousness,
Wash'd in my Saviour's blood.

Therefore hath thy servant found in his heart, to pray this prayer unto thee. And now, O Lord God, thou art that God, and thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant. Therefore now let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee: for thou, O Lord God, hast spoken it, and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever.—2 Sam. vii. 27—29.

GOD had given to David the great promise of the Messiah, and he came and tarried before the Lord in prayer, found his heart aright, and poured out his wants before him. Whenever God inpresses any promise in a forcible manner upon our minds, we should tarry before the Lord in prayer, and pray without ceasing, that we may find our hearts right, and pour them out before him, and, as the proverb says, strike while the iron is hot; for we cannot always expect such hours. Thou, O God, hast often impressed these words upon my heart, and I have laid them before thee again in faith, and thou has abundantly fulfilled them in me. Continue, I beseech thee, to bless me to the end of life, and take away from me whatsoever may obstruct thy blessing, that I may be and remain thy blesssed servant for evermore. Amen.

Lord, I esteem thy judgments right,
And all thy statutes just;
Thence I maintain a constant fight
With every flattering lust.

Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliv-
er, the God of my rock, in him will I trust; he
my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high
wer, and my refuge, my Saviour; thou savest me
om violence. In my distress I called upon the
ord, and cried to my God, and he did hear my
ice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into
is ears. For thou art my lamp, O Lord, and the
ord will lighten my darkness. For by thee I
ve run through a troop; by my God have I leap-
l over a wall. God's way is perfect; the word
the Lord is tried; he is a buckler to all them
at trust in him.—2 Sam. xxii. 2, 3. 7, 29—31.

VID spake these and many of his words, at n
e when God had delivered him from much
ress. Experience gave him hope, and confirm-
his faith. O Lord, grant that I may not so
ly forget thine aid, which I have experienced,
s to behave in any new distress as if thy good-
s had not been manifested to me before. On
contrary, let my faith be strengthened by for-
experiences of thy compassion, and let me re-
t in faith the words of David, and be more and
e convinced, that thou hast heard me also,
t thou art my rock, my fortress, my light, and
shield, for thou art a shield to all them that
their trust in thee.

Thee will I love, O Lord, my strength,
My rock, my tow'r, my high defence;
Thy mighty arm shall be my trust,
For I have found salvation thence.

In my distress I call'd on God,
When I could scarce believe him mine:
He bow'd his ear to my complaint;
Then did his grace appear divine.

Lord God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants, that walk before thee with all their heart; who hast kept with thy servant David, my Father, that thou promisedst: thou spakest also with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day; hearken unto my prayer which thy servant shall make towards this place.—1 Kings viii. 23, 24, 29.

As God fulfilled all that he promised to David, so he will fulfil all that he promises to us, and hearken to our prayer, provided we pray in the proper place, in the right house and temple: that is, in the name of Jesus, of which the temple at Jerusalem was only a type. Now as Solomon was long and earnest in prayer, that God would hear all the supplications that should be offered up to him in the Jewish temple (which occasioned Daniel at Babylon to direct his face in the act of prayer towards Jerusalem) so the Lord will much more hearken to us, praying in the name of Jesus; for he is the Lord of this temple, and greater than the temple. Lord Jesus, teach me to pray as I ought in thy name, and in true faith, and fulfil in me all thy promises.

Go worship at Immanuel's feet,
See in his face what wonders meet;
Earth is too narrow to express
His worth, his glory, or his grace.

Is he a temple? I adore
Th' indwelling majesty and pow'r;
And still to this most holy place
Whene'er I pray I turn my face.

g Solomon loved many strange women. It came pass when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and his heart as not perfect with the Lord his God, as was he heart of David his father.—1 Kings xi. 1, 4.

the wise and pious king Solomon could in his age be so devoted to his wives, as to be seduby them to idolatry, how great is our danger! r easily may we be allured by other creatures lepart from God! For there is a great variety dols in the world. Vain honour, wealth, and ury are three idols. O how necessary is it t we should always walk in godly fear, and r diligent should young persons watch over ir hearts and eyes! And those who intend for marriage state, should pray that they may resemble the sinners before the flood, who k wives according to their fancy, who were fair vain; alas! how many valuable characters, n in the ministry, have been perverted by a a and foolish woman. Even Adam in para- was seduced by Eve. O my God, preserve from all security and seduction, from all, even most subtle kind of idolatry, that no creature r be able to estrange me from thee.

When in the light of faith divine,
We look on things below;
Honour and gold, and sensual joy,
How vain and dang'rous too.

Honour's a puff of noisy breath;
Yet men expose their blood,
And venture everlasting death
To gain that airy good.

How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him, Ye shall not forget, neither shall ye fear other gods. Howbeit they did not hearken. So these nations feared not the Lord, and served their graven images (some had one image, some another.)—1 Kings xviii. 21. 2 Kings xvii. 38. 40, 41.

THUS it is, that Christians halt between two opinions; they fear God, though with a servile fear, and yet continue devoted to their idols, one to this, the other to that, though they worship not a block nor an image. Covetousness is said to be idolatry; and a covetous man, an idolater who says to his hoard, thou art my comfort. The proud man idolizes the opinion of the world, or perhaps his own person; the voluptuous makes a god of his belly; and other creatures are created into idols by the irregular passions of men. Some worship irrational beings; for idolatry is very manifold. Therefore saith John, (1 Ep. v. 21.) "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." O my God, thou hast told us, that no man can serve two masters! grant that we may walk after thee alone, and that in serving we may not mingle God and the world, and halt between two opinions, for thou hast promised to cleanse us from all idols. Ezek. xxvi. 24.

To what a stubborn frame
Has sin reduc'd our mind!
What strange rebellious wretches we,
And God as strangely kind!

Let bold ingratitude
Provoke our weeping eyes;
And hourly as new mercies fall,
Let hourly thanks arise.

Lord was not in the wind, nor in the earthquake, r in the fire. And after the fire, came a still all voice.—1 Kings xix. 11, 12,

'AH was jealous for the Lord, when Ahab ed all the prophets to be put to death, and king that he alone was left, wished to die. intended by this representation to set him , when the Lord was not in the strong wind, in the earthquake. The still small voice of Holy Spirit was to temper his zeal, and give peace; to stop his complaints, and to re- n his excessive suspicions. For God had ved to himself seven thousand, who had not od Baal; and if his thoughts were anxious it futurity, he was to anoint Jehu king, and ha a prophet; the former would wholly over- the idolatry of Baal, and the latter would r on the work of God in his stead. This r should moderate our zeal and our com- its in a time of apostacy, and bring us to a and gentle spirit. We also ought confidently elieve that God has still more faithful ser- s and children than we imagine; and if fu- times appear to us in danger of growing se, God can soon raise a Jehu and other ser- s of his, who have more spiritual gifts than present. Yes, O my God! thou wilt not hold thine aid; grant that we may apply for r diligent prayer!

How beauteous are their feet,
Who stand on Sion's hill,
Who bring salvation on their tongues,
And words of peace reveal!

Go borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels, borrow not a few. And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, there is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed. Thus saith the Lord, they shall eat and shall leave thereof. Fear not, &c. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail. —2 Kings iv. 3, 6, 43. *See also,* 1 Kings xvii. 13, 14.

THUS God supplies all, even our temporal wants; he is the Lord that filleth heaven and earth, how much more is he not able to fill a single house. His barrel and his cruise shall not fail; it is never empty. Did we but possess faith, instead of resembling that unbelieving lord, who said, Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven might this thing be. He lived to see it, but died immediately after for his unbelief. Let us therefore trust in the loving God, that he can still give us food and gladness in abundance, though we observe every corner empty. But we are yet more obliged to believe, that God will supply our spiritual wants and fill our empty hearts with the rich oil of his Spirit. Our acknowledged wants are so many empty vessels, which God will fill, if we only place them before him, and not a few of them; for had the woman had more vessels, she would have obtained more oil.

Our God can every want supply,
And fill our hearts with peace,
He gives by cov'nant and by oath,
The riches of his grace.

hence comest thou, Gehazi? Is it a time to receive money and garments? &c. The leprosy of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and to thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper; as white as snow.—2 Kings v. 25—27.

GEHAZI was not of the same disposition as Elisha, who took no present from Naaman, though he had cured him of his leprosy; for running after Naaman, he obtained from him two talents of silver, and two changes of raiment, but God punished him with the leprosy. Nor was he of the same mind with Samuel, of whom the whole congregation witnessed that he had not received a present from any man's hand. O that all judges were like Samuel! enemies to avarice; for such only are qualified to fill the office. But, alas! how many receive gifts and pervert judgments. This is infamous, and God will judge them. But how much more offensive is it to see ministers covetous! for these, as Luther says, "are good for nothing. Their care is not a care for souls, but of money, of interest, of tithes." They have the root of all evil in them; and how much evil must come out of them! Lord, preserve us from avarice and an eager desire for riches, and grant that we may be content with what we have; and supply us with judges and ministers, whose hearts are averse from covetousness.

Judges who rule the world by laws,
Will ye despise the righteous cause,
When th' injur'd poor before you stands?
Dare ye condemn the righteous poor,
And let rich sinners scape secure,
When gold and greatness bribe your hands?

Fear not, for they that be with us are more they that be with them. And the Lord opene eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behol mountain was full of horses and chariots of round about Elisha.—2 Kings vi. 16, 17. *also,* Heb. i. 14.

HOWEVER numerous our spiritual and temp enemies may be, we have a greater numb holy angels around us, who assist in forwar our salvation. They go in and out with u tend us by day and by night, at home and journey. They assist us in the education care of our children, and support us in the of death. They inspire us with good thou and remind us of what we may have forgo of doing this or that, of going there or here omission of which might have been hurtf our souls and bodies. They are a check evil angels and wicked men, especially wi men in power; and were we more attenti it, we might more clearly discern the se they render us. Lord, grant that all this awaken us to faith, gratitude, and a holy co sation, since these blessed spirits are al about us; and that we may inculcate the upon our children; and keep us in all our and also this night by an angel, that the e may have no power over us.

Ye sons of men, a feeble race,
Expos'd to every snare,
Come make the Lord your dwelling place,
And try and trust his care.

No ill shall enter where you dwell;
Or, if the plague come nigh,
And sweep the wicked down to hell,
'Twill raise his saints on high.

And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, O that thou wouldst bless me indeed and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldst keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me. And God granted him that which he requested. And the Hagarites were delivered into their hand, &c. (viz. the Reubenites) for they cried to God in the battle, and he was intreated of them, because they put their trust in him.—1 Chron. iv. 10. v. 20.

"SEE," says Luther, "the power of faith." If we prayed more fervently, and trusted more in our God, he would certainly be intreated of us, and enable us to conquer both our temporal and spiritual enemies. But the victory he bestows must be attributed to him alone, else he will suffer us to relapse, as we may have already experienced. We are anxious about an impending evil, we pray, God hears us, and prevents the evil. O my God! grant me my requests, and suffer no evil to molest me, or to exceed my strength and hurt my soul. Assist us also this night, and in the last night of death, and deliver us from all evil.

Th' Almighty reigns exalted high
O'er all the earth, o'er all the sky:
Tho' clouds and darkness veil his feet,
His dwelling is his mercy-seat.

O ye who love his holy name,
Hate every work of sin and shame;
He guards the souls of all his friends,
And from the snares of hell defends.

Immortal light, the joys unknown,
Are for the saints in darkness sown:
These glorious deeds shall spring and rise,
And the bright harvest bless our eyes.

And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy fathers, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.—1 Chron. xxviii. 2.

THESE were the last words which David addressed to his son Solomon before his death. In like manner, all good parents admonish their children, and place before them blessings and curses, for the latter also are necessary as a warning to them. O that we and our children would duly attend to these words. The Lord seeketh and requireth the heart, and not a mere outward shew. A genuine repentance, and thorough change, must first take place, and then we shall serve him with a perfect heart, and a willing mind. And if we thus seek him, he will certainly be found of us; but he will reject those who forsake him, notwithstanding the piety of their parents. Lord, grant that all of us, especially all young persons, and our children, may attend to and believe this, and that we may serve thee willingly with all our heart, and continue faithful unto death, nor deviate from thy paths as Solomon did in his old age.

Let children learn the mighty deeds,
Which God perform'd of old;
Which in our younger days we saw,
And which our fathers told.

Our lips shall tell them to our sons,
And they again to theirs,
That generations yet unborn,
May teach them to their heirs.

ssed be thou, Lord God of Israel our father, for ver and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, nd the power and the glory, and the victory, and he majesty. For all that is in the heaven, and in he earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, nd thou art exalted as head above all. Both iches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest ver all, and in thine hand it is to make great, nd give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. Chron. xxix. 10—13.

us was David filled with the praises of God, ore the latter end, when the people were will- to contribute so greatly to the temple, and he ve the glory to God alone. In like manner must not extol ourselves on account of our od works, but praise and magnify God, since is a benefit and an honour to serve the great hovah. O my God! grant us to be filled with y praises, when we draw nigh to the close of e; enable us to repeat the words of David in nfidence, strengthen our faith; and O may we st assured, that thou wilt be our Saviour at e last. Prepare us every day for our latter end, d dispose us to leave the world, praising and orifying thy name.

The Lord Jehovah reigns,
And royal state maintains;
His head with awful glories crown'd,
Array'd in robes of light,
Begirt with sov'reign might,
And rays of majesty around.

Lord, it is nothing with thee, to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power; help us, O Lord our God, for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude: O Lord, thou art my God, let no man prevail against thee. O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company, that cometh against us; neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee. God's answer: *The Lord will be with you.*—2 Chron. xiv. 11. xx. 12. 17.

If Christians were to pray as faithfully in the distresses of war, as Asa and Jehosaphat did here, the Lord would certainly be with us, and give us the victory. But if we rely upon our own power, wisdom, or allies, and instead of having recourse to the counsel and assistance of God, or to prayer, we attempt to command success by our own might and counsel, we shall miscarry and be defeated. And the case is the same in our holy spiritual warfare. Lord, give us grace, that we may not depend upon ourselves in any thing, but in every thing upon thee the living God, and that we may not be dismayed at the multitude of our spiritual and temporal enemies, but continue to pray and trust in thee: so shall we be ever secure of thy powerful help. Amen.

Upward I lift my eyes,
From God is all my aid,
The God who built the skies,
And earth and nature made:
God is the tow'r to which I fly,
His grace in ev'ry hour is nigh.

Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if seek him, he will be found of you, &c. Be ye ong therefore, and let not your hands be weak, your work shall be rewarded. They sought with their whole desire, and he was found of m; and the Lord gave them rest round about. r the eyes of the Lord run to and fro through- the whole earth, to show himself strong in the alf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. hron. xv. 2. 7. 15. xvi. 9.

E promises concern us, and should move ways to set the Lord before us, and to seek with all our heart; he will then surely be l of us all, even the weakest; he will be present with us, fight for us, and all our s shall be rewarded. Lord! grant that we heartily believe this promise, and see it ful- in ourselves, that our hands may not be , nor grow weary in thy work, that we may hee with our whole heart, and receive such gth that we may not, like Asa, to whom words were spoken, fall back again into ief.

Firm and unmov'd are they,
Who rest their souls in God;
Firm as the mount where David dwelt,
Or, where the ark abode.

As mountains stood to guard
The city's sacred ground,
So God, and his almighty love,
Embrace his saints around.

What tho' the Father's rod
Drop a chastising stroke,
Yet lest it wound their souls too deep,
Its fury shall be broke.

Believe in the Lord your God, so shall you be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper. 2 Chron. xx. 20.

THUS said Jehoshaphat, and so it happened; but when he joined himself with the wicked king Ahaziah, his works were broken, &c. And so we read of Joash, that he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, as long as Jehoiada the priest was living; but after his death he fell off, and having made a wicked alliance, he caused Zachariah, the son of Jehoiada, to be put to death before the house of the Lord, for having rebuked him by the command of God. When Zachariah died he said, *The Lord look upon it, and require it.* And then we read, that the army of the Syrians came with a small company of men, and the Lord delivered a very great host into their hand, because they (the Israelites) had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers. And they executed judgment against Joash; they left him in great distress, and at length his own servants conspired against him, and slew him, ch. xxiv. 17—25. God still executes the same judgment of retaliation; for when a people forsake him, he forsakes them in return, and then a small army of the enemy may overpower them. Lord! grant that we may ever believe in thee, and in thy prophets, and not fall off at the last; so shall we be secure of protection against all our spiritual and temporal enemies, and instead of falling under thy displeasure, we shall enjoy thy blessing.

Let sinners take their course,
And choose their road to death;
But *in* the worship of my God,
I'll spend my daily breath.

t God in the days of Zechariah, &c.
as he sought the Lord, God made him
(The same is said of Jotham his son, *he*
tly, because he prepared his ways before
God.) And his name spread far abroad,
marvellously helped till he was strong;
was strong, his heart was lifted up to
tion. So we read of Hezekiah, that *his*
ifted up, when he was magnified in the
nations.—2 Chron. xxvi. 5. 15, 16. xxvii.

sary is it for the faithful, especially
rsons of piety, to pray for persever-
hey may not cease to be religious,
ruly pious parents or teachers die.
stly seek the Lord, and prepare all
ore him, he will give us prosperity
and render us mighty against the
our souls and bodies—but then it
lly behoves us to watch, lest our
d up, and we fall into destruction!
ve us by thy grace from this evil!
we may ever seek thee; and the
e, and the more grace thou givest
more we may humble ourselves.

r tongue thy goodness speak,
loverign Lord of all;
ıgthening hands uphold the weak,
ıse the poor that fall.

l supports our tott'ring days,
ıides our giddy youth:
l just are all his ways,
l his words are truth.

And when Manasseh was in affliction, he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto him; and he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew, that the Lord he was God. And he took away the strange gods.—2 Chron. xxxiii. 12, 13. 15.

THUS God is intreated of the greatest sinners, and receives them into favour, pardons their sins, and delivers them from temporal distress, if they can only penitently confess their sins, and humble themselves before God, not desiring merely to be delivered from their temporal distress, but chiefly from the distress of sin, with resolutions of amendment, like Manasseh, who took away the idol deities, when God had relieved him in his affliction. But there are many who will not humble themselves in their distress before God, as Ahab and Manasseh did, or they return to their former sins after their deliverance. God will afflict these more heavily. He observes narrowly whether we humble ourselves before him; for he said of Ahab, "Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me." Lord, grant that our necessities and thy help may move us to repent and humble ourselves before thee. Soften the hard heart, preserve us from all our sins grant that we may put away all strange gods and not provoke thy dreadful anger.

Consider all my sorrows, Lord,
And thy deliv'rance send:
My soul for thy salvation faints,
When will my troubles end?



In the eighth year of his reign, while he (King Josiah) *was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father: and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images. And the king stood in his place, and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant, which are written in this book.*—2 Chron. xxxiv. 3. 31.

O THAT the world abounded with such princes! The virtues which were possible in this young king, under the law, are much more possible now under the gospel. So that no man, no young man, no king, can excuse himself. But most men are of opinion, that so much piety is rendered needless by the gospel of Christ, that we need not now be so rigorous; yet we read, that the design of the gospel was to teach us to live righteously in this present world. The more we are devoted to the gospel, the more holy we shall be, for the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. Lord, assist us and our children in doing all the words of thy covenant, and raise up kings and princes, who may seek thee with all their heart.

Children in years and knowledge young,
Your parents' hope, your parents' joy,
Attend the counsels of my tongue,
Let pious thoughts your minds employ.

The eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease, (from building the house of God.) *We had spoken unto the king, saying, the hand of our God is upon all them for good, that seek him. So we fasted and besought our God for this, and he was entreated of us; and the hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of such as lay in wait by the way.*—Ezra v. 5. viii. 22, 23. 31.

When we are building a spiritual temple, and edifying our own souls and the souls of others, if our enemies, from within and without, attempt to hinder us, we must have recourse to prayer; the eye and the hand of God will be upon us, and our enemies, instead of hindering, will forward our work. Therefore let us go on comfortably and indefatigably in labour and in prayer; the Lord will not cause his work to cease. Lord, grant us faith, fidelity, and diligence in our work of edification, that we grow not weary, but continue in prayer, and then experience thy protection, which will secure us against such as lay in wait to hinder us from building thine house.

Behold the sure foundation stone,
Which God in Zion lays,
To build our heavenly hopes upon,
And his eternal praise.

Chosen of God, to sinners dear,
And saints adore the name,
They build their whole salvation here,
Nor shall they suffer shame.

We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, &c. Remember the word that thou commandest thy servant Moses (when God promised, if they turned unto him to bring them back unto their own country, though they were cast out unto the uttermost parts of heaven.) *O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name; and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant, this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man* (the king.)—Nehem. i. 7, 8. 11.

THUS Nehemiah confessed his own sins, and the sins of the people, that they had dealt very corruptly; for sin is indeed a corruption of the heart. But he humbly pleaded the divine promise, and besought God, that he might find mercy in the sight of the king, and the Lord inclined the king's heart, and he asked him, Why he was sad? And Nehemiah prayed again to the God of heaven, before he made his request to the king. Lord! assist us, when we have sinned, in humbling ourselves, and grant that we may fear thy name; of ourselves we can do nothing, even to our own satisfaction; our best endeavours are little better than impotent will and desire. Grant that we may do all things with prayer, and therein lay hold of thy promises. So shall we find favour with thee and man, and thy work will prosper in and by us.

To God I cried with mournful voice,
I sought his gracious ear,
In the sad day, when troubles rose,
And filled the night with fear.

Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, If thou together holdest thy peace at this time, then sh their enlargement and deliverance arise to Jews from another place, but thou and thy ther's house shall be destroyed; and who knows whether thou art come to the kingdom for such time as this?—Esth. iv. 14.

How great was the faith of Mordecai, and self-denial of Esther! for she sent him word th they should fast for three days, and "so," s she, "will I go in unto the king, which is n according to the law; and if I perish, I perish The Lord helped them, and Haman, their wo and most insolent enemy at court, was hang on the same gallows that was erected for M decai. Thus pride goeth before a fall. Gr men should well remember this; and those t Christians, who are in high stations, should str and be concerned for the kingdom of God, a consider that as the reason of their exaltati If they neglect this, woe be to them! But G has other means in store to save his church prayer and supplication are our spiritual armo "It is good," saith Luther, "that God ha not left the care of his church wholly to court; for Satan would not then suffer a so to escape." Lord, be thou our protector, all our present and future spiritual and tempo distresses.

Now I'm convinc'd the Lord is kind,
To men of heart sincere;
Yet once my foolish thoughts repin'd,
And border on despair.

The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?—Job i. 21. ii. 10.

EVERY event which befals us, whether it be from men or other creatures, is to be received as coming from God, and it becomes us not to vent reproaches and impatient language against men. This is acting like the dog, who bites the stone which is thrown at him. We should immediately recollect the design of God. He means to awaken the careless to repentance, and to cleanse and purify the converted. Examine, therefore, thyself this evening, what the intention of God is with respect to thee, and from what evil he means to deliver thee. The present judgments and plagues of the world may lead to the same reflection. Lord, awaken us thoroughly by all thy judgments, and cleanse us from all sin. Grant us repentance, faith, and patience, that as we receive so much good from thee, we may be prepared to receive evil, and suffer thy designs towards us to take place, and that we may arrive at such a degree of piety as to praise thee, like Job, whether thou givest or takest away.

Naked as from the earth we came,
And crept to life at first,
We to the earth return again,
And mingle with the dust.

The dear delights we here enjoy,
And fondly call our own,
Are but short favours borrow'd now,
To be repaid anon.

He shall deliver thee in six troubles, yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee. (Thus we read Prov. xxiv. 16. *A just man falleth seven times* (into misfortune) *and riseth up again). Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit. And these things hast thou hid in thine heart: I know that this is with thee. Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.*— Job v. 19. x. 12, 13. 1 Sam. vii. 12.

My God, thou hast also helped me hitherto, and delivered me out of more than six troubles; thou wilt not forsake me in any present or future affliction, nor suffer it to exceed my strength, which is but very feeble; thou knowest how frail, and weak, and helpless, I am. Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit. O visit me now and hereafter, and look upon me in the hour of death, and preserve and finally deliver me. And though thou shouldst hide thyself, yet grant that I may ever know and feel that thou, in mercy, thinkest upon me.

To God, the only wise,
Our Saviour and our King,
Let all the saints below the skies,
Their humble praises bring.

'Tis his almighty love,
His counsel and his care,
Preserves us safe from sin and death,
And ev'ry hurtful snare.

He will present our souls,
Unblemish'd and complete,
Before the glory of his face,
With joys divinely great.

In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed, then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man. Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man: to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.—Job xxxiii. 15, 16, 17. 29, 30.

THUS God striveth to awaken the children of men, by alarming them with terrors within, or sickness without, so that in the great day every one will be left without excuse. If ever thou hast experienced, O man! any fear or terror of conscience, or bodily pain, recollect the meaning of it. Turn to the Lord with all thy heart, confess thy sins penitently, and call upon Christ, who, according to the 24th verse, hath found a ransom; so will the Lord also be gracious unto thee, and deliver thee from going down to the pit. O my Saviour, keep me from pride, and spare my soul. Grant that thy terrors, and my bodily pains, may draw me nearer and nearer to thee; that I may rest in thy atonement this night, but more especially the last night of my life, and may depart from hence in peace.

Let everlasting glories crown
Thy head, my Saviour, and my Lord;
Thy hands have brought salvation down,
And writ the blessings in thy word.

What if we search the globe around,
And search from Britain to Japan,
There shall be no religion found,
So just to God, so safe for man!

Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye way, when his wrath is kindled but a ed are all they that put their tr Psalm ii. 12.

THESE words are applicable to c libertinism in religion which reject never arrived at such a pitch as at one is perpetually seduced by anoth the fountain of all sin: for whoso ceive Christ, may commit any sin, of the reach of human punishments of God is kindled against these, an repent, they will perish. This is sin which God punishes to this day attempt to dethrone God and Chris ashamed to pronounce the name c will indeed sometimes use the ind Heaven and Providence. To Chri to be absolute strangers; or if the Christian faith, they admit Christ p in their lips, but not into their h worldly gain, or temporal honour, morality, is dearer than Christ cruc not yet become to them the power of God; before this can happen the sider themselves as weak and foolish is not agreeable to a proud heart.

Rulers and kings unite,
To form a vain design,
Against their Lord their pow'rs
Against his Christ they join.

Be wise, ye rulers now,
And worship at his throne;
With trembling joy, ye people b
*To God's e*ternal Son.

The Lord hath heard my supplication, the Lord will receive my prayer. The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee; for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee. For the needy shall not always be forgotten; the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever.—Psalm vi. 9. ix. 9, 10. 18.

WHOEVER would receive comfort from these words, must first be sensible of his poverty, and misery, and humbly acknowledge his sins; and feeling nothing in himself but indigence and unworthiness he must come with all his poverty to the rich Saviour, and ask his forgiveness. The Lord will supply all his wants, however great his poverty and misery may be, and protect him especially in time of need. And he will not forsake nor forget him; he may hope in him, and hope for the best from him; though a suspicious heart always apprehends the worst. Neither his hope, nor his prayer, nor even a sigh will be lost. O my God, grant me faith, that I may say, the Lord heareth my supplication, the Lord receiveth my prayer. Praised be God, who hath not rejected my prayer, nor turned away his goodness from me, but he is my protector and my hope.

God hears when dust and ashes speak,
He pities all our groans;
He saves us for his mercy's sake,
And heals our broken bones.

Thou hast seen it, for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite it with thy hand: the poor committed himself unto thee, thou art the helper of the fatherless. In the Lord put I my trust; how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain? Help Lord, for the godly man ceaseth. God's answer: *For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy; now will I arise, saith the Lord, I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.* And then the language of faith is, *I have trusted in thy mercy, my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.*—Psalm x. 14. xi. 1. xii. 1. 5. xiii, 5.

LORD, grant that we may draw comfort from the whole of these promises; that however the flock may be disturbed by enemies from without, or our souls from those within, we may firmly believe that thou wilt arise, and provide for the whole church and for our souls; so that our hearts may trust in thy mercy, and rejoice in thy salvation. And as these words were very comfortable to a dying person, so grant that we also may hope and trust in thee alone, and abundantly experience thy mercy.

Why do the men of malice rage,
And say with foolish pride,
The God of heaven will ne'er engage
To fight on Zion's side:

But thou for ever art our Lord,
And powerful is thine hand;
As when the heathen felt thy sword,
And perish'd from thy land.

Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall fear? the Lord is the strength of my life, of om shall I be afraid? For in the time of ouble he shall hide me in his pavilion, in the cret of his tabernacle shall he hide me. I had inted, unless I had believed to see the goodness the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on ord, be of good courage; wait I say on the Lord. Psalm xxvii. 1. 5. 13, 14.

s is a word of comfort in the present time of itual and temporal judgments. If the ene- s of truth, or all the evil spirits combined, eavour to obscure the light of God's word, o weaken our faith, in order to make us ry in the work of God; yet the Lord will be light and our salvation, and the strength of life; so that we need not fear any thing, though our enemies amount to a host. he will hide us in his pavilion in the evil of war, or other judgments, and assist us in y inward and outward affliction. We must, efore, learn to wait on the Lord.

One privilege my heart desires:
O grant me an abode
Among the churches of thy saints,
The temples of my God!

Should friends and kindred, near and dear,
Leave me to want or die,
My God would make my life his care,
And all my need supply.

My fainting flesh had died with grief,
Had not my soul believ'd
To see thy grace provide relief;
Nor was my hope deceiv'd.

In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust, let me never be ashamed; deliver me in thy righteousness. Bow down thine ear to me, deliver me speedily: be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me. Into thine hand I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth. O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee, before the sons of men. Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of men.—Psalm xxxi. 1, 2. 5. 19, 20.

EVERY good Christian may apply this promise to himself, and believe, that if he trust in God before the sons of men, or confess his faith and hope before the world, the Lord will never suffer him to be confounded in that for which he hopes, and will manifest his great goodness to him, though it should be hid from him for a time.—Yes, Lord Jesus! I trust in thee, thou art my strong rock, and my house of defence. And as, in the hour of death, thou didst commit thy spirit into the hands of thy Father, so do I, this evening, commit mine into thy hands; and hope to do so at the hour of death. Do thou hide me in thy tabernacle, and thy secret pavilion, and save me by thy cross and passion.

Into thine hand, O God of truth!
My spirit I commit:
Thou hast redeem'd my soul from death,
And sav'd me from the pit.

I sought the Lord and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him from all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth them out of them all. The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants; and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.—Psalm xxxiv. 4. 6, 7. 15. 19. 22.

DAVID here praises and extols the power of the Lord, who heard him when he poured out his supplications, and delivered him from all his fear and distress. And his desire was, that other unhappy men might comfort themselves, and believe that the Lord will hear them, encamp round about them, and deliver them, for his eyes and ears are likewise directed towards them. Should their sins render them backward to believe this, yet if they have recourse in faith and confidence, to Jesus, they are justified, invested with the righteousness of Christ, and are delivered from the load of guilt. There is not a sin recorded against them, however infirm they may be, for it is written, "none of them that trust in him shall be desolate." So that they may depend upon comfort and peace.

I'll bless the Lord from day to day,
How good are all his ways!
Ye humble souls that use to pray,
Come teach my lips to praise.

Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for
not thyself because of him who prospe
way, because of the man who bringeth
vices to pass. Cease from anger, a
wrath, fret not thyself in any wise to
evil doers shall be cut off: but those tha
the Lord they shall inherit the ear
xxxvii. 7, 8, 9.

THIS inheritance of the earth is ment
times in this very psalm, ver. 9, 11, 2
We should, therefore, duly attend to i
Saviour enforces it, when he says,
"Blessed are the meek, for they sh
the earth." Wicked, contentious, ine
will not arrive at this inheritance, t
should flourish like a green bay tree.
beget in us meekness towards our enem
fall into sin; we have more reason to
than to complain: for according to
verse, "yet a little while and the wick
be;" for he that attacks the servants, th
and the cause of God, and carries on
with violence, runs headlong into ru
fall is at hand. But of the righteou
ver. 31, "The law of God is in his
none of his steps shall slide." There
wait with patience and resignation.

Then let me make the Lord my trus
And practise all that's good;
So shall I dwell among the just,
And he'll provide me food.

ney are disquieted in vain; he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them. And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee. Deliver me from all my transgressions, make me not the reproach of the foolish. Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto my cry, hold not thy peace at my tears; for I am a stranger with thee, &c. Let all that seek thee, rejoice and be glad in thee; let such as love thy salvation, say continually, the Lord be magnified. But I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me. Psalm xxxix. 6, 7, 8. 12. xl. 16, 17.

EARTHLY minds think only of amassing wealth, and endeavour to establish themselves here; but the faithful consider themselves only as pilgrims, travelling through, and lodging at an inn, but they are citizens yonder, and therefore look for eternal life in their heavenly country, anxious only to obtain remission of sins; and relying for salvation, rest, and peace upon Christ, rid themselves of much vain disquiet, and glorify the Lord. Assist us, Lord, that we may seek Thee supremely, love thy salvation, and praise Thee as the God of grace.

See the vain race of mortals move,
Like shadows o'er the plain,
They rage and strive, desire and love,
But all their noise is vain.

This mortal life decays apace,
How soon the bubble's broke!
Adam, and all his num'rous race,
Are vanity and smoke.

Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty; wit thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majes ride prosperously, because of truth and meekness and righteousness: and thy right hand shall teac thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp i the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the peop fall under thee. God is our refuge and strength a very present help in trouble. The Lord of hos is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge. Sela —Psal. xlv. 3—5. xlvi. 1. 11.

SUCH is the prayer and the comfort of the faith ful when the enemies attack the church an city of God, or harass their souls: when the study to darken truth and equity, and when sp ritual and temporal judgments break in. Ou defender will certainly gird his sword upon hi thigh, in the present times, and preserve hi truth, his city, and our souls. He will still pro vide many sharp arrows, many faithful labourers and will, in the midst of his judgments, be ou help and trust, that we need not fear though th earth should be removed. Lord, grant us faith and much incense for prayer, for it is now high time to pray.

Now be thy heart inspir'd to sing
The glories of my Saviour King,
Jesus, the Lord, how heav'nly fair
His form! how bright his beauties are!

Dress Thee in arms, most mighty Lord,
Gird on the terror of thy sword;
In Majesty and glory ride,
With truth and meekness at thy side.

id is known in her palaces for a refuge. For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death. He saith, *Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.*—Psalm xlviii 3. 14. l. 15. 22.

GOD is still the refuge of the faithful, and guides and leads them as his children, and delivers them out of all their adversity, when they call upon him; therefore, no particular distress is mentioned. He desires their praise, and furnishes them with materials for it; but secure and thoughtless men are anxious only about their bodily distresses, whereas they should reflect penitently upon their sins, and ask forgiveness. It is for this purpose God inflicts temporal calamities upon them; which having answered the desired end, he will also remove. As for those who think lightly of sin, God addresses them, ver. 21, "These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself; but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes," and if thou continuest impenitent, I will tear thee in pieces, and there shall be none to deliver. How many are suddenly snatched away, both by sea and land! The mariner fires a signal of distress, but is carried off by the storm and waves before any succour can reach him. Lord, grant that our calamities may awaken us to repentance and through thy Spirit, be the means of saving our souls.

Far as thy name is known,
The world declares thy praise;
The saints, O Lord, before thy throne,
Their songs of honour raise.

Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength: but trusted in the abundance of his riches (or other things,) *and strengthened himself in his wickedness. But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God, I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.* Therefore, *hear my prayer, O God, &c. For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul; they have not set God before them. Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray and cry aloud; and he shall hear my voice. Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.*—Psal. lii. 7, 8. liv. 2, 3. lv. 17. 22.

WHEN the proud enemies of the truth, within and without the church, set themselves against us, our comfort is, that they trust in themselves, have not God before their eyes, do not pray, and indeed cannot, whilst they are so wickedly employed. But, O Lord! let us pray the more, and cry unto thee evening, morning, and at noon, yea, let us cast all our burden upon thee, and suffer none of it to lie upon ourselves: then wilt thou hear us, and provide us rest, however Satan, our own evil hearts, or wicked men, may storm and rage.

I saw the wicked rise.
And felt my heart repine,
While haughty fools, with scornful eyes,
In robes of honour shine.

O what a slippery steep,
The thoughtless wretches go!
And O that dreadful fiery deep,
That waits their fall below!

In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust, I will not fear what flesh can do unto me. When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back; this I know, for God is for me. Be merciful unto me, O God! be merciful unto me, for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge. Because of his strength will I wait upon thee; for God is my defence. Through God shall we do valiantly: he it is that shall tread down our enemies. Therefore, *hear my cry, O God, &c. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.* Psal. lvi. 4, 9. lvii. 1. lix. 9. lx. 12. lxi. 1—3.

In all our distresses within or without, we must have recourse to the word of God, we should highly prize it, arm ourselves therewith continually, hold fast by God, and call upon him, against the art and power of all our spiritual and temporal enemies; so shall we know in our hearts, that God is our defence and our gracious God. We must despair of ourselves, but not of God; through him we may, and shall do valiantly. He will tread down our enemies, and lead us to a high rock, and be our trust, and a strong tower from all our enemies.

My God! in whom are all the springs
Of boundless love and grace unknown,
Hide me beneath thy spreading wings,
Till the dark cloud is overblown.

My heart is fix'd; my song shall raise
Immortal honours to thy name;
Awake, my tongue, to sound his praise,
My tongue, the glory of my frame.

thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come. Iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. I am weary of my crying, my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. O Lord, make no tarrying. Psal. lxv. 2, 3. lxvi. 18. lxix. 3. lxx. 5.

If God hear our prayer, surely we ought to acknowledge it. He will hear our prayer, and not act contrary to the glory of his name. But the heavy load of guilt must first be removed from our hearts; if we make humble confession, and do not wilfully engage in any iniquity, nor reserve a sin to ourselves, and depend on the atoning sacrifice, he certainly will hear, insomuch that we may, like a certain pious minister, always conclude our prayer with these words, "Praised be God, for he will not reject my prayer." But we must not only pray, but wait, and persevere in prayer: for Jesus was weary of his crying, his throat was dried, but he thereby atoned for our impatience, and acquired merit, through the power of which we may persevere to the end. Nothing will exceed our strength, and we shall be, at last, saved with complete and free salvation.

Now shall my solemn vows be paid
To that almighty pow'r,
That heard the long request I made
In my distressful hour.
My lips and cheerful heart prepare
To make his mercies known:
Come ye, who fear my God, and hear
The wonders he has done.



For God is my king of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth. God is the judge, he putteth down one and setteth up another. Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain. I will remember the works of the Lord, surely I will remember thy wonders of old. Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters. Thou leadest thy people like a flock. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues. But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not; yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath: for he remembered that they were but flesh.—Psal. lxxiv. 12, lxxv. 7. lxxvi. 10. lxxvii. 11. 19, 20. lxxviii. 36. 38.

God is still the same as he was of old, a God doing wonderful works; and he is the king and judge, who abaseth one and exalteth another, as we may even now observe, if we but attend to it, and give him the praise. And when men rage against him, and rob him of his glory, he will arm himself against them. Let us think of his former wondrous works, and his mysterious dispensations; let us honour him in our hearts, not flatter him with our mouths, and lie, as many do, in confessing their sins. Our God continues still to punish such hypocrisy, though he does not stir up all his wrath.

Great God, how oft did Israel prove
By turns thine anger and thy love:
There in a glass our hearts may see,
How fickle and how false they be!

Turn us again, O God of Hosts, and cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved. Behold and visit this vine: let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand. O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways? I should soon have subdued their enemies, &c. That men may know that thou whose name alone is Jehovah, art the most high over all the earth.—Psalm lxxx. 7. 14. 17. lxxxi. 13, 14. lxxxiii. 18.

THE vineyard of God is his church, which is continually infested by enemies from within and from without, and great judgments both spiritual and temporal are gone forth against them. The spiritual are most dangerous, but they are little regarded. The chief of these judgments are unfaithful shepherds and labourers, who may be well called rapacious wolves; these waste, and burn, and cut down the vineyard, like wild boars; and because this is not attended to, God comes down with temporal judgments, with war, famine, pestilence, and other plagues. Would we be delivered from these, and enjoy peace, we must become obedient to God and repent, acknowledging that all our help proceeds from him, and that he alone is the Most High. This is the surest road to peace. But if we attribute any thing to ourselves, or rob him of his honour, and continue disobedient, then all prospects of peace will vanish away.

Lord, when thy vine in Canaan grew,
Thou wast its strength and glory too!
Attack'd in vain by all its foes,
Till the fair branch of promise rose.

Fair branch, ordain'd of old to shoot
From David's stock, from Jacob's root,
Himself a noble vine, and we
The lesser branches of the tree.

For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee. Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger towards us to cease. Be merciful unto me, O Lord, for I cry unto thee daily. Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.—Psalm lxxxiv. 11, 12. lxxxv. 4. lxxxvi. 3—5.

O MY God, be thou also my sun, illumine me, and make my darkness light, that all the gloomy shades of ignorance may be dispelled. Be thou my impenetrable shield, to cover and protect me. Who then shall be able to overcome me? Thou wilt not suffer me to want any good thing, but wilt make me happy, because I put my trust in thee. And as thou hast heretofore been gracious unto thy people, so abate thy displeasure now manifested in these judgments, and comfort us again with thy help, grace, and goodness, that so we may be crowned with loving kindness and tender mercies; for thy compassion is great to all them that call upon thee, and consequently great towards me, who am now thy suppliant.

Salvation is for ever nigh
The souls who fear and trust the Lord;
And grace, descending from on high,
Fresh hopes of glory shall afford.

Mercy and truth on earth are met,
Since Christ the Lord came down from heav'n;
By his obedience so complete
Justice is pleas'd, and sin forgiv'n.

For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens. Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted. For thou art the glory of their strength: and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted. For the Lord is our defence: and the holy One of Israel is our king.—Psalm lxxxix. 2. 15—18.

THESE are comfortable promises concerning Christ's kindgom of grace, in which we, who are true believers, are included. But mark, every promise flows from grace and truth. By his grace he forgives us abundantly, yea, he daily pardons all our sins; by his truth, he punctually and faithfully performs all his promises, and leads us into the true and right path. And we, his people, shall be blessed and shout for joy, and walk in the light of his countenance, which will dispel the darkness of unbelief and ignorance. And we shall daily rejoice in his name, and be exalted in his righteousness: for his name is an ointment poured out upon us, and a strong fort, and his righteousness is our most glorious ornament. He only is our boast, our shield, our king, in and by whom we are strengthened against all our enemies. Grant, O Lord, that we may truly believe these glorious promises, and daily see them fulfilled in us.

My never-ceasing songs shall show
The mercies of the Lord;
And make succeeding ages know
How faithful is his word.



righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he ıll grow like the cedar in Lebanon. Those that planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish the courts of our God. They shall still bring rth fruit in old age, they shall be fat and urishing. To shew that the Lord is upright: is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in m. Judgment shall return unto righteousness, ıd all the upright in heart shall follow it.— salm xcii. 12—15. xciv. 15.

Lord will certainly perform this glorious nise; and the faithful should make use of it heir old age to strengthen and to stimulate n; that they may continue to labour and to r, and to testify the faithfulness of God in r life and conversation, and that there is no ghteousness in him. For though the enemy reject their testimony, and attempt to ten righteousness or the divine truth, yet t will be right, truth will remain truth, and gment will the sooner be brought to light, so all the upright in heart will follow it, and it nourishing to them, whilst others endea- r to feed upon husks and bones, or shells and f.

The plants of grace shall ever live,
Nature decays, but grace must thrive;
Time, that doth all things else impair,
Still makes them flourish strong and fair.

Happy the church, thou sacred place,
The seat of thy Creator's grace;
Thine only courts are his abode;
Thou earthly palace of our God.

Thy walls are strength, and at thy gates
A guard of heav'nly warriors waits,
Nor shall thy deep foundations move,
Fix'd on his counsels, and his love.

In the day when I call, answer me speedily shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion; time to favour her, yea, the set time is co thy servants take pleasure in her stones, your the dust thereof. So the heathen sl the name of the Lord, and all the king earth thy glory. The children of thy shall continue, and their seed shall be est before thee.—Psal. cii. 2. 13—15. 28.

God hears our prayer as soon as present we receive it not immediately; so that obliged to pray the more fervently; an this earnest persevering prayer God has succour, and it is the forerunner of spee In all our distresses he will certainly a and his whole church, and propagate his It is time: for his servants are now long pray that Zion may be built. The of the farther extension of the kingdom are more manifest now than before, and fore we pray more confidently for that than if there were no hopes of amendmen is written for generations to come, for th the servants of God shall be blessed.

Hear me, O God, nor hide thy face,
But answer lest I die;
Hast thou not built a throne of grace
To hear when sinners cry?

Thou wilt arise, and shew thy face,
Nor will my Lord delay
Beyond th' appointed hour of grace,
That long expected day.

Let Zion and her sons rejoice,
Behold the promised hour;
Her God hath heard her mourning voi
And comes t' exalt his power.

They soon forgat his works, they waited not for his counsel; but lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. And he gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul. Nevertheless he regarded their affliction, when he heard their cry; and he remembered for them his covenant. Psal. cvi. 13—15. 44, 45.

In times of extraordinary calamity and distress we must not forget the former works of God, but remember how often he hath assisted us. We must not seek counsel here and there, but wait for his counsel; for even the children of God may advise us to that which is not the counsel of God. A certain person was in great anxiety about an important matter which he was to undertake, and all his Christian friends advised him to it; but the words "They waited for his counsel," made so lively an impression upon him, that he waited for the counsel of God, and this conducted him happily and safely, though in a manner different from the expectations of his friends. Nor should we wantonly lust after this or that, but be content with God in all things, else, like the Israelites, we may obtain our request, but it may bring leanness into our souls, to our disquiet and chastisement. However, God will look upon real distress, and infallibly succour us.

God of eternal love,
How fickle are our ways!
And yet how oft did Israel prove
The constancy of grace!

Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning, thou hast the dew of thy youth. He hath shewed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen. The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure.—Psal. cx. 3. cxi. 6, 7.

WHEN Christ by his death and resurrection overcame all his enemies, he merited an eternal righteousness, and therewith adorned his people that they might have peace and power to brin him a free-will offering. The victory of h glorious gospel shall produce children like t dew of the morning. View the countless a pearly drops of morning dew, and hear w pleasure that the universal church of Jesus sh be equally numerous. He will do great acts, c quer his enemies, and convert them into frie This he has done, and will continue to for his words and works are truth, and are in faithfulness to his promises. Every will be fulfilled, but we must learn to wai Christ himself must wait till God shall hav all enemies under his feet. Lord, we b thee fulfil this promise; may millions of ch be born unto thee; let us by thy victory c all things, and wait patiently for thy salva life, and pleasures for evermore after deat

Thus the eternal Father spake
To Christ the Son, Ascend and sit
At my right hand, till I shall make
Thy foes submissive at thy feet.
From Zion shall thy sword proceed,
Thy word, the sceptre in thy hand,
Shall make the hearts of rebels bleed
And bow their wills to thy comma

ur God is in the heavens, he hath done whatsoever he pleased. O Lord, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant, and the son of thy handmaid, thou hast loosed my bonds. The Lord is on my side, I will not fear what man can do unto me. They compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord, I will destroy them. Thou hast thrust sore at me, that I might fall; but the Lord helped me, the Lord is my strength.—Psal. cxv. 3. cxvi. 16. cxviii. 6. 11. 13, 14.

If we give the glory to God alone, distrust ourselves and call upon him, then he will provide every good thing for us, and create in us such a faith that we shall speak and testify of him, though men should molest us. We may repeat the declaration, "I am thy servant, I am thy servant." If we have had, or still have, faithful parents, let these words be our comfort, as they were that of a faithful minister, when in his exile he was obliged to leave his pious mother upon her death-bed. Grant, O Lord, that we may believe thee to be present with us, and not be afraid of men; and though they or the evil spirits should compass us about like bees, yet may we, in thy name, and in imitation of thee, destroy them; and though they thrust sore at us, may not fall; for thou art our helper and our strength. All believers, especially all faithful teachers, have this comfort, and hence Luther called the 118th psalm his psalm.

What shall I render to my God
For all his kindness shown?
My feet shall visit thine abode,
My songs address thy throne.

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. Remove from me the way of lying; and grant me thy law graciously. I have chosen the way of truth, thy judgments have I laid before me. Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it unto the end.—Psal. cxix. 9. 18. 29, 30. 33.

The old and the young cannot live irreproachably, without taking heed of the word of God; if they depart from that, they soon fall into error and vice, to their own ruin. But would they make it their rule, then they must study it thoroughly; which cannot be done, without the illumination of the Holy Spirit, for which they must diligently pray. For if David considered his eyes as shut, how much more should we consider ours so, and pray, "Open thou mine eyes," &c. He who doth not fervently pray thus, is still blind, and hath not an eye, even though he should be deep in theological learning, and esteemed a profound divine. Lord, grant that we may see the wonders of thy law and thy gospel, and turn us out of the wrong way. Let thy judgments be always before us, as our guides, that we may choose the narrow path of truth, and steadfastly walk in it to the end: for this was David's request, throughout this long psalm.

How shall the young secure their hearts,
And guard their lives from sin?
Thy word the choicest rules imparts
To keep the conscience clean.

I walk at liberty, for I seek thy precepts. I remembered thy judgments of old, O Lord, and have comforted myself. I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies. I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments. Psalm cxix. 45. 52. 59, 60.

never walk at liberty, but when we regulate lves by the word and precepts of God; then njoy a quiet and cheerful conscience in it. And though the judgments which befal orld create a turbulent appearance, yet we omforted in considering the past judgments od, how he protects his own against their ies, and turns every thing in the end to the it of his church. He will continue to do if we only take heed to our ways, whenever e chastised; and the moment we perceive lves deviating, turn back our feet to his monies, and make haste and delay not to his commandments; he will turn to us, and us speedy succour. Assist us, Lord, in ng at liberty in thy ways, according to thy and in turning our feet without delay to stimonies.

The starry heav'ns thy rule obey,
The earth maintains her place:
And there thy servants, night and day,
Thy skill and power express.

But still thy law and gospel, Lord,
Have lessons more divine;
Not earth stands firmer than thy word,
Nor stars so nobly shine.

This I had, because I kept thy precepts. Thou a my portion, O Lord: I have said, that I wo keep thy words. The law of thy mouth is bet unto me than thousands of gold and silver. H sweet are thy words unto my taste, yea swee than honey to my mouth. At midnight I will r to give thanks unto thee, because of thy righte judgments. Seven times a day do I praise th because of thy righteous judgments.—Psalm cx 56, 57. 72. 103. 62. 164.

O HOW hearty and fervent was David's love a longing after the word of God! Those who lish the husks of worldly wisdom better than t word of God, are unhappy, in the midst of th knowledge, grandeur, and affluence. But ev the faithful have reason to be ashamed, to s forgiveness, and to warm and kindle their co hearts this evening, with the same flame th animated David. O my God, pardon our neg gence of thy word, and this evening revive c love and desire of it; give us a true and consta appetite to it, that it may become our perpet food and defence against all our enemies, a that we may not hunt after the husks of t world, worldly lusts and riches. Let thy wo be dearer to us than gold, and sweeter th honey; let us meditate upon it day and nig and return thee our hearty thanks for it.

O how I love thy holy law!
'Tis daily my delight;
And thence my meditations draw
Divine advice by night.

Am I a stranger, or at home,
'Tis my perpetual feast;
Not honey dropping from the comb,
So much allures the taste.

bre I was afflicted, I went astray; but now ave I kept thy word. It is good for me, that I ave been afflicted; that I might learn thy atutes. I know, O Lord, that thy judgments re right, and that thou in faithfulness hast aficted me. Quicken me after thy loving kindss, so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth. am thine, save me, for I have sought thy preepts.—Psalm cxix. 67. 71. 75. 88. 94.

FORE man is truly humbled, he is full of error folly, and is not yet arrived at true wisdom, rever learned and philosophical he may be; " wisdom," says Solomon, " is with the low-

If David stood in need of humiliation, and fessed the justice of God's judgments and stisments, and even thanked God for them, earnestly ought we to pray for David's disction, and to humble ourselves under the hty hand of God, that he may exalt us; for iveth grace to the humble, that with filial fidence they may rest assured of his help. , O my God, I am thine, thy reconciled, igh unworthy child, and thy servant; assist in seeking thy commandments, grant me er to fulfil them, and preserve me in a perpestate of humility.

I know thy judgments, Lord, are right,
Though they may seem severe;
The sharpest sufferings I endure
Flow from thy faithful care.

My heart was fashion'd by thy hand,
My service is thy due:
O make thy servant understand
The duties he must do.

Through thy precepts I get understanding; fore I hate every false way. Thy word is a unto my feet and a light unto my path. thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as usest to do unto those that love thy name. thy face to shine upon thy servant, and tea thy statutes; they are *my counsellors.*—Psal 104, 105. 132. 135. 24.

He who doth not strictly conform himse God's word, and make that his counsellor not become wise, nor possess the pruden the just, nor the wisdom which cometh above, however great his natural understan or however extensive his knowledge. He always mistake the counsel of God, and fo his own lusts, or imaginations, or take foolish men as his counsellors, and so wall in total darkness;—but, if he would becom lightened by the word, he must apply to G prayer, that he may make his face to shine him, and turn to him with grace, salvation, and life. O my God, turn to me this eve in grace as thou hast done frequently, and le word be a shining light in all my ways, t may become truly wise, and not fall into error or darkness.

Let all the heathen writers join
To form one perfect book,
Great God, if once compared with thine
How mean their writings look!

Not the most perfect rules they gave
Could shew one sin forgiv'n,
Nor lead a step beyond the grave;
But thine conduct to heaven.

I cried with my whole heart, hear me, O Lord, I will keep thy statutes. Great peace have they which love thy law; and nothing shall offend them. I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies; for all my ways are before thee. I have gone astray like a lost sheep, seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.—Psal. cxix. 145. 165. 168. 176.

THE word of God should always be connected with prayer; for why is it, that many hear and read it without being the better? they do not pray in faith for a blessing. We must, like David, pray with the utmost fervour, that we may understand and keep the word of God, and bring forth fruit; for a real Christian has nothing so much at heart, as that he may always act up to the word and will of God: his prayer is, Lord let my footsteps be sure, according to thy word, and let nothing contrary to thy law have dominion over me, either in my doctrine or practice. If this prayer be granted, great will be our peace; for the word of God is a word of peace, Jesus himself will be our peace, and then nothing shall offend us; we shall take heed unto all our ways before God, and so walk before him, as to continue humble like David, who considered himself as a straying and lost sheep. Lord, we are by nature straying and lost sheep, seek and fetch us back from the error of our ways, and preserve us in thy pasture, in communion with thy flock, unto eternal life.

My soul had gone too far astray,
My feet too often slip;
Yet since I've not forgot thy way,
Restore thy wand'ring sheep.

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, fr
cometh my help. My help cometh from
which made heaven and earth. He will
thy foot to be moved. As the moun
round about Jerusalem, so the Lord
about his people, from henceforth even
Let thy priests be clothed with righteous
let thy saints shout for joy. This is n
ever, here will I dwell, for I have de
Psal. cxxi. 1—3. cxxv. 2. cxxxii. 9. 14.

THE congregation of faithful Christia
earth is now the true Jerusalem and Zio
alone we expect succour from the Lo
hath made heaven and earth; for he is
protector of his church, who will not s
foot to slip, but will conduct us with pe
are surrounded by the hills, and armies
tresses of God, and God himself is rou
us, as a strong wall. He will clothe
priests, that is, all the faithful with r
ness and salvation. And we shall have
rejoice in this beautiful garment, a
peace and tranquillity; for God hin
dwell and rest in us, and we shall be a
to him in Christ, if covered with the
of his salvation. Lord, grant that we m
in this robe!

Up to the hills I lift my eyes
Th' eternal hills beyond the skies:
Thence all her help my soul derives
There my Almighty refuge lives.

Happy is he, that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God, which made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is; which keepeth truth for ever. Therefore, *both young men and maidens, old men and children, let them praise the name of the Lord. Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand.*—Psal. cxlvi. 5, 6. cxlviii. 12, 13. cxlix. 5, 6.

God fulfils all this especially under the new covenant, for Jesus our king is come according to his promise; so that God has kept his word, will eternally keep it, and fulfil all his promises; having not only created heaven and earth out of nothing, but gloriously accomplished the great work of redemption, and established his kingdom. Hence old men and children rejoice in their king and in his government. For he is so good a king, so gracious a Lord, that they praise him on their beds, and their heart and lips should overflow with the praises of his love day and night. For hereby they would be furnished with two-edged swords, to overcome all their enemies.

Long as I live I'll bless thy name,
My King, my God of love;
My work and joy shall be the same
In the bright world above.

Fathers to sons shall teach thy name,
And children learn thy ways;
Ages to come thy truth proclaim,
And nations sound thy praise.

A man of understanding shall attain unto counsels. The fear of the Lord is the begin of knowledge. Incline thine ear unto wis and apply thine heart to understanding; ye thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up voice for understanding; if thou seekest he silver, and searchest for her as for hid treas then shalt thou understand the fear of the L and find the knowledge of God. When wis entereth into thine heart, understanding shall thee.—Prov. i. 5. 7. ii. 2—5. 10, 11.

THERE is then no other way of arriving at t wisdom, and of being kept by understand than to fear God, to take advice, and not t wise in our own conceit; and when wis entereth our hearts, to lift up our voice, pray that it may be increased, to look and se for it in the word of God, as miners do for and silver. He who doth not pray earnestly true wisdom and knowledge, doth not yet k God or himself, and is therefore utterly ignor And how can a man in any degree bring ot to true wisdom, and give them right cou when he himself hath not received counsel f God, and is still a fool. Lord! grant that teachers and learners may observe this; lead us in the right way to the true knowl of thyself; and of Jesus Christ whom thou sent.

Behold the morning sun
Begins his glorious way;
His beams through all the nations run,
And light and life convey.

Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her, and happy is every one that retaineth her. Let them not depart from thine eyes: so shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck. Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely. When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid, &c. I have led thee in right paths. When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened, and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.—Prov. iii. 17, 18. 21—24. iv. 11, 12.

THERE is no true wisdom, happiness, security, and peace, but in the way of the wisdom from above, which is of Christ: but before we arrive at this, we must first be enabled to repent, confess our folly and sin, forsake the broad way, and come to Christ; then will all be fulfilled in us. Lord Jesus, bring us to thy communion, to thy pleasant ways of peace, that our souls may enjoy true life, that our feet may be quite secure, that we may not grow weary of our journey. May we ever persevere, without loitering or reluctance, and yet may we never be too hasty and stumble. O that at all times, particularly this night, we may have no cause to be afraid, but have strong confidence in the blessed God.

'Tis by the faith of joys to come,
We walk through deserts dark as night;
Till we arrive at heav'n, our home,
Faith is our guide, and faith our light.

So Abram by divine command,
Left his own house to walk with God;
His faith beheld the promis'd land,
And fir'd his zeal along the road.

Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise, &c. The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour.—Prov. vi. 6—11. xxi. 25. Before he performs any good work, says Luther, death surprises him. Such are negligent preachers, magistrates, masters of families, who would acquire heaven, and honours, and wealth, without labour or suffering. *The slothful man saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets.*—Prov. xxii. 13. Such, says Luther, are those preachers, magistrates, and servants, who in the performance of their duty, will not submit to any inconvenience, nor hazard. *I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and lo! it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw and considered it well, I looked upon it, and received instruction.*—Prov. xxiv. 30—32.

He who doth not repent and turn to God betimes, who is remiss in prayer, and inattentive to the scriptures, his heart, his house, his flock, if he be a minister, or his jurisdiction, if he be a magistrate, is like the garden or vineyard, grown over with thorns and nettles. Lord! grant that we may take this to heart, and receive instruction, lest it be also our fate.

My drowsy pow'rs, why sleep ye so?
Awake, my sluggish soul!
Nothing has half thy work to do,
Yet nothing's half so dull.

Lord, shall we lie so sluggish still,
And never act our parts?
Come, holy Dove, from th' heav'nly hill,
And sit and warm our hearts.

not wisdom cry, and understanding put forth voice? counsel is mine and sound wisdom: I understanding, I have strength. By me kings n, and princes decree justice. I lead in the of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of ment. That I may cause those that love to inherit substance; and I will fill their sures. Blessed is the man that heareth me, ching daily at my gates.—Prov. viii. 1. 14, 15. 21. 34.

re all foolish by nature. Would we be we must humbly acknowledge and forsake olish ways, and come to Jesus, the foun- f heavenly wisdom, hear his word, and at his gates. He who omits this, is nt, though he should be a renowned statesman, or magistrate; for without isdom, no man can teach, govern, or enact n a manner acceptable to God. But if be our wisdom, he will be our counsellor riend, he will give understanding and th, enrich and bless thee. Grant there- O Jesus, that we may ever watch at thy attend carefully to thy word, and make no in obeying thy call and thy will.

Shall wisdom cry aloud,
And not her speech be heard;
The voice of God's eternal word,
Deserves it no regard?

I was his chief delight,
His everlasting Son;
Before the first of all his works
Creation was begun.

Wisdom has builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars. She hath killed her beasts, she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table. She hath sent forth her maidens, she crieth upon the highest places of the city. Whoso is simple let him turn in hither; as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Forsake the foolish, and live; and go on in the way of understanding.—Prov. ix. 1—6.

CHRIST says much the same in the invitation to the wedding and the great supper; Matt. xxii. and Luke xiv. He is himself this wisdom, and caused himself to be put to death for us, and hath built his house, his kingdom, and prepared every thing, and sent out his servants, to invite men, and tell them all things are ready, come to the wedding. But the heavenly wisdom calls those simple and fools, whom she invites. And such are all men by nature: for is it not folly for those who are invited to suffer lands and oxen and wives to keep them away, to prefer temporal things to eternal, and perish for ever? Yet Christ calls the simple and fools, and even the greatest sinners, and he calleth us too by his word; therefore let us immediately, this evening, forsake all our folly, and attend to the soul in preference to the body, to things eternal rather than temporal. He will prepare a sumptuous feast for us: we shall eat of his bread, and drink of his wine, and live and be filled. Help us, O Jesus, and grant that we may hasten to thee, and truly enjoy thee.

e that walketh uprightly (that is, purely, simply, honestly) *walketh surely: but he that perverteth his ways shall be known. The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him: but the desire of the righteous shall be granted. The hope of the righteous shall be gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish. The way of the Lord is strength to the upright; but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity. The righteous shall never be removed; but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.*—Prov. ix. 24. 28—30.

HIS whole book, indeed the whole Bible, shews ie vast difference between the good and the icked; and yet the world will not see the difrence, notwithstanding the promises here devered to the good, and the threatening to the icked. Lord, grant that from a principle of rue faith we may become truly good, innocent, ure, and therefore safe; that we may have nohing to dread, like the wicked; who have cause o fear, lest their works should be made mani-est. Let our desire be granted, that our hope nay be full of joy. Grant that we may ever alk in thy way, and therein experience confi-ence and comfort, whilst the wicked, who de-art from it, are afraid and desperate; and never uffer us to be removed, but enable us to stand ast for ever.

Happy the heart where graces reign,
Where love inspires the breast;
Love is the brightest of the train,
And strengthens all the rest.

'Tis love that makes our cheerful feet
In swift obedience move:
The devils know, and tremble too,
But Satan cannot love.

Riches profit not in the day of wrath; the righteo is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked come in his stead. The wicked worketh a deceitf work; but to him that soweth righteousness, sha be a true reward. There is that scattereth, an yet increaseth; and there is that withholds more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. E that trusteth in his riches shall fall; but t righteous shall flourish as a branch. Behold t righteous shall be recompensed in the earth; muc more the wicked and the sinner.—Prov. xi. 4. 18. 24. 28. 31.

HERE again we see the difference between th good and the wicked. Though the latter be rich yet their riches profit not in the day of wrath nor in the calamities of war. Their distress greater, and notwithstanding their parsimony they are reduced to poverty, or ruined, becaus they vainly trusted in the uncertainty of riches for their labour shall be in vain. But the right eous are delivered out of all trouble, and the riches are secure, being lodged in the hand o God; the more they distribute, the more the get, and flourish. And though they suffer, the have comfort in proportion; whereas the wicke often suffer more, and have no comfort. Lor grant that we may be made partakers of all th promises which are in Christ Jesus, yea, an Amen.

No, I shall envy them no more,
Who grow profanely great;
Though they increase their golden store,
And rise to wond'rous height.

They taste of all the joys that grow
Upon this earthly clod;
Well may they search the creatures through,
For they have ne'er a God.

He that is despised, and hath a servant, is better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread. He that tilleth his land, shall be satisfied with bread. He that followeth vain persons, is void of understanding. There shall no evil happen to the just; but the wicked shall be filled with mischief. There is that maketh himself rich yet hath nothing; there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches.—Prov. xii. 9. 11. 21, xiii. 7.

He who is small and low in his own eyes, and doth not attempt great matters, but studies, to do his own business, to till his land, that is, to do that which he is commanded to do, and to which God calleth him, is certainly better than he who is moved by pride or vain curiosity to pursue things unnecessary. Solomon calls such fools. Is this prudence, that learned men should study merely for the sake of becoming great and famous, and on this account involve themselves in vain speculations and useless controversies, which do not concern them, thus neglecting their real duty, to the loss of the true sustenance of their souls? But it is necessary in our worldly matters, that every man should attend to his own business, and not attempt various undertakings at once, with a view to great wealth; for according to an old German proverb, "fourteen trades, fifteen misfortunes." And thus a man may seem to make himself rich, and yet have nothing; for it is not great influence only which makes a man rich, but rather the happy disposition of being contented with a little.

Deny thyself, and take thy cross,
Is the Redeemer's great command;
Nature must count her gold but dross,
If she would gain this heavenly land.

He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed. A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not; but knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth. Fools make a mock at sin. There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death. A wise man feareth and departeth from evil; but the fool rageth and is confident.—Prov. xiii. 20. xiv. 6. 9. 12. 16.

A WISE man is humble, afraid of his own heart, and has recourse to prayer for success; but he who relies on his own heart, his understanding, or learning, is a fool. He is proud, presumptuous, insolent, and runs headlong into ruin; though such a man's ways seem right unto him, yet the end therefore are the ways of death. He is a companion of fools, for persons of similar dispositions easily agree together, and so he becomes more and more foolish and presumptuous. And though he should seek wisdom he will not find it; for dissolute men, says Luther, seek wisdom, but not in earnest; they seek it for their own purpose, pride and vanity; therefore they never obtain it; they laugh at those who make Jesus their wisdom. Lord, grant that we may earnestly seek true wisdom and knowledge, and associate with the wise and the good, not with scorners; that we may increase in wisdom, and shun all evil.

Preserve me, Lord, in time of need,
For succour to thy throne I flee;
But have no merits there to plead,
My goodness cannot reach to thee.

In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence; and his children shall have a place of refuge. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death. The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death.—Prov. xiv. 26, 27. 32.

WHAT a superiority do the righteous enjoy over the wicked! They have at all times, and in all calamities, a sure refuge, a strong asylum, to which they fly, and in which their children also shall be sheltered. There was a person, who received great comfort from these words, in the late troubles:—What more can we desire, than temporal and spiritual refuge for ourselves and children? The fear of the Lord shall be also in us a spring of life; for we adhere to Jesus, the true fountain of life, and who is himself our life. The fear of the Lord secures us against sin, which is a fatal snare of death. If the wicked be driven away in his wickedness, we have nothing to fear in the dark valley of death, and may be cheerful even in our expiring moments. O glorious promise! Lord, give us faith, and fulfil all these promises towards us and our children, and grant us particularly comfort in the hour of death.

Ye sons of pride, that hate the just,
And trample on the poor;
When death has brought you down to dust,
Your pomp shall rise no more.

God will my naked soul receive,
When sep'rate from the flesh:
And break the prison of the grave,
To raise my bones afresh.

Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure, and trouble therewith. The Lord will destroy the house of the proud. He that is greedy of gain, troubleth his own house; he that hateth gifts shall live. The Lord is far from the wicked; but he heareth the prayer of the righteous. The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility.—Prov. xv. 16. 25. 27. 29. 33.

It is certainly greater gain and wealth to fear the Lord, to trust in him, and be content with a small substance, than to possess great riches, without the fear of God, without faith, without a contented heart, and so to have much disquiet. And indeed large possessions are often only a trouble to the mind. The house of him who hath no fear of God, and is proud, is still exposed to destruction: for God resisteth the proud; or if he be covetous, he destroyeth his house himself, as many proud and mercenary men have experienced in the late calamities of war. But they who hate gifts, especially persons who sit in judgment, they shall live, the Lord will be their refuge even in calamities. The Lord is still far from the wicked, but he is nigh to the righteous with his grace and help, and heareth their prayer; for he is nigh to all that call upon him. O Lord, give us thy true fear, preserve us from pride and covetousness, and lead us to everlasting honour!

The saints to sore distress are brought,
And wait and long complain;
Their cries shall not be still forgot,
Nor shall their hopes be vain.

reparation of the heart in man, and the ans- r of the tongue is from the Lord. All the ways s man are clean in his own eyes: but the Lord ighth the spirits. Commit thy works unto the rd, and thy thoughts shall be established. When an's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his mies to be at peace with him.—Prov. xvi. 1— 7.

form many schemes and designs, of saying loing this or that, but the success of all our rtakings proceeds from the Lord. No man d project any thing without God, nor rely the goodness of his intention, but confess if left to himself, he can only err. He d be diffident of his opinion, and not ima- that his way is always pure and right: then the Lord himself will establish his in all his ways. He must daily commit all fairs unto the Lord, and intreat his guid- in every circumstance of life. Then his cts and designs will succeed, for the counsel) Lord standeth fast. Every thing that he ds and undertakes, under the direction of will succeed, other men will see and ad- it, and even his enemies will be at peace him.

The Lord is just and kind,
The meek shall learn his ways;
And every humble sinner find
The methods of his grace.

I hear thy word with love,
And I would fain obey:
Send thy good Spirit from above,
To guide me, lest I stray.

Every one that is proud in heart, is an abomination to the Lord: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished. Pride goeth before destruction; and an haughty spirit before a fall. Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud. He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city.—Prov. xvi. 5. 18, 19. 32.

How horrible should a proud man appear in his own eyes, since he is an abomination to the Lord, who will resist and scatter the proud; however they may hang together, or however strong their party may be, their punishment and fall will certainly take place. However great, or powerful, or learned, a man may be, if he grows proud, his acquirements will be vain. It is therefore doubtless better to be of a lowly mind, to be humble with the afflicted, to espouse the cause of the poor and miserable, than to divide the spoil with the proud, and make large conquests, though it were of whole cities and countries; for he is better and greater in the sight of God who is master of his own mind, patient, and superior to his whole will and pride; the Lord is gracious to him. Grant us, O Lord, true patience and humility of heart, that we may ever be preserved from falling!

I'll sing thy truth and mercy, Lord,
I'll sing the wonders of thy word;
Not all thy works and names below,
So much thy pow'r and glory show.

The God of heav'n maintains his state,
Frowns on the proud, and scorns the great:
But from his throne descends to see
The sons of humble poverty.

The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe. He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him. The discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression. It is an honour for a man to cease from strife; but every fool will be meddling.—Prov. xviii. 10. 17. xix. 11. xx. 3.

FAITH, the word of God, patience, and prayer, are the best armour, and will keep us in a strong tower; for by faith we continue in the name of the Lord, which is to us a strong tower, and will shelter us in every distress. By the word of God, which is sure, we are, through fervent prayer, secure in our path, may face all mankind, and be ready to answer every man. If we can pass over offences, and patience arms us with the mind of Christ, then we shall be ever victorious; for the Lord himself will fight for us. It is no disgrace thus patiently to pass over an offence, but an honour and real prudence; consequently the impatient, who are always litigating and quarreling, are fools, for they give uneasiness to other men, as well as themselves. Some men live in contention, as if it were their element, and can neither speak nor write, without using bitter and opprobrious language.

When overwhelm'd with grief,
My heart within me dies:
Helpless, and far from all relief,
To heav'n I lift mine eyes.

Within thy presence, Lord,
For ever I'll abide;
Thou art the tow'r of my defence,
The refuge where I hide.

Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the Lord pondereth the hearts. (Whatever is done by God's command, says Luther, we are sure is right. Without God's word every thing is mere imagination, conjecture, and uncertainty. *A wicked man* (who follows not the word of God, but his own conceit) *hardeneth his face;* but *there is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord. The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the Lord.*—Prov. xxi. 2. 29. 31.

He who acts without the command of God, and following his own humour, runs on headlong, to overcome a difficulty; whether he bends or breaks it, precipitates and destroys himself, be he ever so great, powerful, rich, and wise; for there is no wisdom, nor understanding, &c. against the Lord. We should all observe this, that we may humble ourselves, and do every thing by the command of God alone. Armies especially should be taught, that however well the men may be equipped and disciplined, yet blessing and victory cometh of the Lord; else the most formidable power and the wisest counsel may do more hurt than good. But as spiritual and temporal victories come from the Lord, we must make him our friend, and not fight against him with our sins; when victory is obtained, we must ascribe it to him, else he will suffer us to be subdued.

God is a spirit just and wise,
He sees our inmost mind:
In vain to heav'n we raise our cries,
And leave our hearts behind.

udent man foreseeth the evil, (the judgments of od) *and hideth himself* (in a sure refuge;) *but e simple* (the unconverted) *pass on* (securely, thout the fear of God, or prayer) *and are pun-hed. By humility and the fear of the Lord, are hes, and honour, and life. Let not thine heart ey sinners: but be thou in the fear of the Lord l the day long; for surely there is an end, and ine expectation shall not be cut off.*—Prov. xxii. 4. xxviii. 17, 18.

OEVER duly considers the present evil, the ments of God, and desires to hide himself, t first turn to the Lord from all his sins, and onger follow other sinners, but fly impatient-) the name of Jesus, that strong tower, walk y in the fear of God, suffer, endure, and be ent. From this he will derive no harm or race; on the contrary, it shall be riches and our and life to him, and his expectation shall ı to joy; whereas the impatient, who will not are any thing, plunge themselves into calami- and distress. Lord, keep our hearts con-ally in thy fear, grant us patience, and pre-e us from all evil.

Let Zion in her king rejoice,
Tho' tyrants rage, and kingdoms rise;
He utters his Almighty voice,
The nations melt, the tumult dies.

Be still, and learn that I am God,
I'll be exalted o'er the lands;
I will be known and fear'd abroad:
But still my throne in Sion stands.

O Lord of hosts, Almighty king,
While we so near thy presence dwell\
Our faith shall sit secure, and sing
Defiance to the gates of hell.

So shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto my soul; when thou hast found it, then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off. It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment. Say not, I will do so to him, as he hath done to me; I will render to that man according to his work. He that hath no rule over his spirit (but is impatient and returns evil for evil;) *is like a city, that is broken down, and without walls.*—Prov. xxiv. 14. 23. 29. xxv. 28.

The son of Sirach also says, buy wisdom without money. But very few learn or buy this wisdom for the soul, which they may have gratis. Men had rather buy wisdom for money, but this is not spiritual wisdom, which carries the soul through distress and death; it is merely wisdom to make a figure with. Wisdom for the soul requires humble disciples; therefore so few admire it. Whoever would learn and buy it, must with the son of Sirach, first lift up his hands, confess his folly, and bend to her yoke. If he who arrives at this wisdom be a judge or magistrate, he will not have respect to persons in judgment, nor return evil for evil. For, as we read, ch. xii. 16, a fool's wrath is presently known; it breaks out without discretion, and he becomes as a city without walls. Lord, grant unto our souls the true wisdom, which will avail us even in death.

Thus saith the wisdom of the Lord,
Bless'd is the man who hears my word:
Keeps daily watch before my gates,
And at my feet for mercy waits.

Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit, there is more hope of a fool than of him. Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein. He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife.—A man's pride shall bring him low, but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit (He saith of himself) *Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man.*—Prov. xxvi. 12. 27. xxviii. 25. xxix. 23. xxx. 2.

He that is wise in his own conceit, is proud, insolent, and contentious; he scorns and despises other men, and diggeth pits for them, but falls into them himself, his own pride will plunge him therein. There is certainly more hope of a fool than of such a conceited, proud, and contentious man. A man of true wisdom is humble; he doth not esteem himself wise, but will confess before God, "I am, without Christ, the most foolish of all men." Hence, Luther says, "Wise men acknowledge that their wisdom is nothing. Fools know every thing, and cannot err;" therefore they presume to be proud, and pretend to great things, censure every thing, and thus manifest their folly. Whereas the humble apply for direction to God, and make Jesus, as revealed in the Scripture, their only wisdom.

Bury'd in shadows of the night,
We lie till Christ restores the light,
Wisdom descends to heal the blind,
And chase the darkness of the mind.

Jesus beholds where Satan reigns,
Binding his slaves in heavy chains;
He sets the pris'ners free, and breaks
The iron bondage from our necks.

He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor. To have respect of persons is not good; for, for a piece of bread that man will transgress. He that hasteth to be rich, hath an evil eye, and considereth not, that poverty shall come upon him. He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack; but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.—Prov. xxviii. 8. 21, 22. 27.

THE covetous and unjust man heaps up much substance, and knoweth not who will have it, for it often falls into the hands of strangers, and the poor. He hasteth to be rich, but to his destruction and ruin; for how many misfortunes have rich men experienced in time of war! Ill-gotten goods do not prosper, and reach not to the third heir; daily experience confirms the truth of this. How unjustly acquired and dangerous is that property, when judges themselves have respect of persons, take bribes, pervert justice, and commit iniquity for a piece of bread. He who gives nothing to the poor, is also unjust, though he should take nothing unjustly away. Such an one shall have many a curse; he is unmerciful and shall be judged unmercifully. But he that giveth unto the poor shall not lack. The alms he hath given, in faith and love, become a loan in the hand of God, for which he shall receive abundant interest. He is God's sower; and God will give bread to his sower, and will not suffer him to want.

Thrice happy man, who fears the Lord,
Loves his commands, and trusts his word;
Honour and peace his days attend,
And blessings to his seed descend.

the transgression of a land, many are the princes reof: but by a man of understanding and knowge, the state thereof shall be prolonged. Prov. viii. 2. The son of Sirach says, Eccl. x. 8. *ecause of unrighteous dealings; injuries and ches gotten by deceit, the kingdom is translated m one people to another.*

sins of princes and subjects produce great , revolutions, and changes; for after tyranny, stice, and avarice, or perhaps abominable pro-m, have had a long reign, and oppressed a ıtry and its inhabitants, God will interpose, sometimes deprive a prince of his dominions; ıe alone presides over the kingdoms of men, gives them to whomsoever he will. Sub- should likewise remember their sins, when . changes and calamities of war befal them; y one should consider himself as having con-ıted fuel to the fire; and though he should feel so much distress as others, let him not ecure; he knoweth not what may soon befal . Sin is the ruin of a people, and brings on poral and eternal suffering; therefore every . should turn from all his sins, that he may pe the judgments of God. Lord, grant that evils we now suffer may lead us truly to re-; and let not any of the changes we undergo eed in thy wrath, but tend to glorify thy ıe and propagate thy kingdom.

Where shall the man be found,
Who fears t' offend his God?
Who loves the gospel's joyful sound,
And trembles at the rod?

He that putteth his trust in the Lord shall be made fat. He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool; but whoso walketh wisely, (that is, applieth the word of God to his instruction, and trusteth in that alone,) *he shall be delivered.* For, *Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.*—Prov. xxviii. 25, 26. xxx. 5.

HYPOCRITES and blind Pharisees imagine, that their heart is good, simple, and upright; yet nothing is more deceitful than our heart; he therefore who trusteth in it is a fool, for he trusteth in the greatest deceiver and seducer, and cheats himself out of his salvation, by suffering himself to be prevented from genuine repentance. He who desires truly to repent, must acknowledge with sorrow not only his gross sins, but his evil heart, his inward corruption; and must call upon God to forgive him his secret sins, and wholly to change his heart. In doing this, he must adhere to the gracious word of God and Christ; so shall the word of God be to him a shield against all his enemies. Lord, grant that we may never put our trust in our own heart, but that we may humbly confess its corruption, and through the power of thy grace be delivered therefrom.

Happy the man, to whom his God
No more imputes his sin:
But wash'd in the Redeemer's blood,
Hath made his garments clean.

While I my inward guilt suppress
No quiet could I find;
Thy wrath lay burning in my breast,
And rack'd my tortur'd mind.

He that loveth silver, shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity. When goods increase: they are increased that eat them: and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes. The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep. There is a sore evil, which I have seen under the sun, namely riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.—Eccles. v. 10—13.

THE covetous man has never enough; the more he has and gets, the more he desires to get. What benefit does he derive from his riches? He eats and drinks; so does the poor man, who perhaps relishes his plain fare better than the rich man doth his costly table. The one can sleep soundly amidst his poverty and labour; the other often loses his rest by being too full, and thus his riches are a plague even to his body: this is a sore evil. The damage to his soul is much greater. Such covetous men, who desire to be rich, have the root of all evil in them, and are ensnared and sunk in perdition, by their own appetities, which are the strongest incentives to evil, and can only be restrained by a true conversion. Lord, preserve us from every snare, and grant us to be happy in thee, and contented.

My God, my portion, and my love,
My everlasting all,
I've none but thee in heav'n above,
Or on this earthly ball.

It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting; for that is the end of all men: and the living will lay it to his heart. Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth. I said of laughter, it is mad: and of mirth, what doth it?—Eccles. vii. 2—4. ii. 2.

How careless and impenitent are men, in choosing to go to the house of mirth and rioting, as the vulgar particularly do on the Lord's Day, which is an aggravation of the sin. Persons of distinction have at certain seasons their daily assemblies, balls, or sports. At such times their whole heart is in the house of joy. But the Scripture here calls them fools; for none of them remembers his end, his death, from which we are never secure at any hour; many have died suddenly at the gaming table and in the ball room. Now whoever dies thus careless and impenitent, dies unhappily. Is not this folly? Would it not be better and wiser, instead of this mad joy, to mourn religiously for our sins? for godly sorrow belongs to true repentance, and amends the heart. Without such godly sorrow we remain impenitent, and have no true comfort in life or death; for none but they that mourn in Sion, and lament their sins, shall be comforted. Oh, that we might this evening feel a godly sorrow for our sins, and repent.

Lo the young tribes of Adam rise,
And thro' all nature rove,
Fulfil the wishes of their eyes,
And taste the joys they love!

Better is the end of a thing (of a good thing,) ***than the beginning thereof.*** (Luther.) All is well that ends well. The beginning is easy;) ***and the patient in spirit than the proud in spirit. Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry; for anger resteth in the bosom of fools. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.***—Eccl. vii. 8, 9. ix. 10.

We are required to be in haste, not to do evil, nor to be angry, but in every good, in hearing and doing good, and we are to do every thing with our might, speedily, actively, cheerfully, earnestly, and with pleasure. As St. Paul says, we are not to be weary in well-doing. Above all things, the work of conversion should be begun with life and spirit, in the days of our youth, whilst God calls and excites us to hasten and not delay in consulting with flesh and blood; then we may soon accomplish our point: for great advantage is gained by decided resolution. But we must not only begin with this life and activity; we must persevere in it unto the end. The end crowns the work. Lord, grant us grace to turn to thee this very evening, whilst we have thy call, or should we have already accepted it, may we still more entirely surrender ourselves to thee, and so do the work with all our might, and persevere in it unto the end. For it is good to begin, it is better to continue, but it is best of all to finish.

Come, sound his praise abroad,
And hymns of glory sing;
Jehovah is the soverign God,
The universal King.

Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged yet surely, I know, that it shall be well with them that fear God. But it shall not be well with the wicked. There is a vanity which is done upon the earth, that there be just men, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked; again, there be wicked men, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous. —Eccl. viii. 11—14.

GOD doth not immediately punish the sinner, but is long-suffering, and waits for repentance, to which his long-suffering should lead men. On this account men often grow more secure and hardened in sin. They imagine, because God's sentence is not executed speedily, that he will be like unto them, lightly regard their sins, and not punish them at all. And they are rendered still more secure, when they observe, that the righteous often suffer, and the wicked prosper, as if they were good, and had done the works of the righteous. But God doth this, in order to improve the piety of the righteous, by chastisements, and to draw the wicked to himself by the engaging motive of benefits. If they are not moved to repentance by this, their punishment hereafter will be the heavier. But it shall be well with the righteous at last, both in this world and the next. Lord, grant that we may not stumble at thy judgments, and enable us to wait patiently for the end.

When man grows bold in sin,
My heart within me cries,
He hath no faith of God within,
Nor fear before his eyes.

This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it seemed great unto me; there was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it: now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that poor man. Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless, the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard. Wisdom is better than weapons of war. When he that is a fool walketh by the way, his wisdom faileth him, and he saith to every one that he is a fool.—Eccl. ix. 13—16. 18. x. 3.

How many a poor, but wise and righteous man may at this time have delivered a city by his prayers, though the world despises him! Many even ridicule prayer itself, and though the scorner be indeed a fool, he calls every one, especially him who prayeth, a fool, and tells him with a sneer, that he is fit for nothing else. Were we perfectly qualified for this, we should be very accomplished indeed. The great day will shew, who have been fools in this world.

Are sinners now so senseless grown,
That they the saints devour?
And never worship at thy throne,
Nor fear thine awful power?

Great God, appear to their surprise,
Reveal thy dreadful name;
Let them no more thy wrath despise,
Nor turn our hope to shame.

Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child thy princes eat in the morning; that is, when are intent only upon eating and drinking, luxury. *Blessed art thou, O land, when thy is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat i season, for strength and not for drunken Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and le heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, wa the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of eyes: but know thou, that for all these t God will bring thee into judgment.* Eccl. 17. xi. 9.

YOUNG persons love to have their liberty, their pleasure, and do only what they pl and they see examples of this in their be who eat and drink only for their pleasure, do nothing in season, but turn night into and live in all kinds of vanity and luxury pecially in times of mirth, and at particula tivals. But all ranks ought to remembe judgments of God; for God will bring into ment the sins of youth as well as those of and eminent persons, for he is the Judge Some of his judgments take place in this w when great men study only the gratificati their sensual appetites, eating, drinking, wanton joy, thereby occasioning the peo sin: therefore it is written, "Woe to th land!" O that princes and subjects, humbly and seriously reflect on the cause present judgments!

Almighty God, turn off their eyes
From these alluring vanities;
And let the thunder of thy word,
Awake their souls to fear the Lord.

He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love. Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits. Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.—Sol. Song ii. 4, 5. iv. 16. v. 1.

In communion with Jesus, both the head and the heart are warmed. The soul obtains meat and drink, and that not sparingly, but bountifully. Her bridegroom introduces her to his banqueting-house, refreshes and comforts her abundantly, that is, fills and strengthens her, so as to render her fruitful and fit for every good work; thus he incites the souls of men, saying, "Eat, my beloved, and drink, O friends." We should therefore not be backward, but remember that it is our duty to apply Jesus, his grace, and his righteousness to ourselves, that we may be filled, and bring forth the fruits of righteousness. By this means we invite Jesus into our garden, to taste his excellent fruits, that is, to accept graciously the fruits which we have brought forth through him, and to bless them. And then Jesus will come and refresh us farther, and he will sup with us, and we with him. Lord Jesus, grant us life and full comfort with thee, that we may bring forth fruit abundantly.

Behold the rose of Sharon here,
The lily which the valleys bear;
Behold the tree of life, that gives
Refreshing fruit, and healing leaves.

Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchants? Thy neck is like the tower of David, builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men. Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?—Sol. Song iii. 6. iv. 4. vi. 10.

THE first words shew how acceptable the church of Christ, and every member thereof, is to her Saviour and bridegroom, that her prayer is a sweet smelling savour, which ascends like incense to him in heaven. No enemy can damp the fragrant incense of her entreaties; they are, according to chap. ii. 14. "a sweet voice." This should excite us all to sincere and persevering prayer, and be a comfort to us against all our enemies; for our prayers and sighs, supported by the word of God, are swords, and shields, and armour of strength, and we may rest secure, as in a strong tower. We shall even become terrible to our enemies, particularly to the formidable enemies of our souls, to whom we shall appear as an army of mighty men. And those mighty warriors, the holy angels, shall guard us powerfully with their swords, day and night. Lord, grant that our prayer may come up to thee, as a fragrant incense and a sweet odour, and be accepted as an evening sacrifice, that we being protected with thy shield against all our enemies, may become terrible to them.

When strangers stand, and hear me tell,
What beauties in my Saviour dwell,
Where he is gone they fain would know,
That they may seek and love him too.

ehold, thou art fair, my love, behold, thou art fair. Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee. —Sol. Song iv. 1. 7. and vi. 4.

ERE the bridegroom addresses his whole church, nd every true member thereof, as his bride, peatedly calling her fair, very fair, and with-ut spot, for he hath cleansed her from all n with his blood, and clothed her with the fair rnament of his righteousness. Hence he saith his disciples: "Ye are clean. He that is ashed is clean every whit." Every faithful ul should consider this, and believe what the ridegroom so frequently repeats; for he knows ow difficult it is for a sinner to believe. We ould trust more to his word than to our own elings, and be assured, that his Father and he alight in the soul that is fair and without spot rough the atonement of Jesus. The ornament ith which we are decked is his; he covers all ur sins with it, so that he will behold nothing nful in us, but be pleased with the lovely or-ament of his blood and his righteousness. This great comfort in time of distress or death; but is a comfort which belongs only to the peni-nt, to those who have forgotten their father's ouse, and renounced their own righteousness, nd earthly mind. Lord Jesus, divest us of our wn righteousness, and of the defiled garment ne flesh, and grant that we may be found by nee fair and beautiful, that thou mayest delight n us, and we may receive comfort from thy fa-our in the hour of death.

Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? Set me as a seal upon thine heart, and as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.—Sol. Song viii. 5—7.

THE true church of Christ, and every faithful soul, leaneth upon her friend in the wilderness of this world, relies wholly upon him, and upon nothing else. She desires his name to be impressed as a seal upon her heart, that he may seal, and guard, and inclose her, that she may be, according to chap. iv. 12. "a garden inclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed," so that nothing may hurt her. She prays in particular for a right sense of her love, that it may be strong in his, that death may not separate her from it, that it may be such a vehement and internal flame, as no waters of affliction can quench. Such is the love of Christ towards us. Lord Jesus, grant that we may earnestly long for thy love, and pray for it day and night; and not cease till thou hast kindled this flame of the Lord within us. May we be duly sensible of thy love, and love thee in return; may we be sealed by it in our hearts, inclosed and guarded, that no enemy, not even death, may separate us from thine affectionate and compassionate regard.

should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt re and more; the whole head is sick, and the ole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it; &c. our country is desolate, your cities are burnt ith fire, &c. To what purpose is the multitude f your sacrifices unto me? &c. Your new moons nd your appointed feasts my soul hateth. And hen ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine yes from you. Wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes. Come, now, let us reason together.—Isaiah i. 5—7. 11. 14—16. 18.

ow many countries, cities and villages are beome desolate! And what is the cause! Sin and ypocrisy. Men bring their offerings, celebrate heir feasts, frequent the church and the Lord's supper, perform external acts of worship, and yet neither change their heart nor amend their conduct, but revolt more and more. If we wish for better times, let us reform our hearts, and pray that we may be enabled to cleanse them thoroughly, and put away the evil of our doings, even every growing and predominant sin; then will the Lord graciously reason with us, and forgive our sins: though they be as scarlet, make them as white as snow; and deliver us from the distresses of war, sickness, poverty, and other plagues. So that repentance, true repentance of the heart, is necessary; without this no outward appearance, nor any thing else will avail us.

The Lord the judge his churches warns,
Let hypocrites attend and fear;
Who place their hopes in rites and forms,
But make not faith or love their care.

It shall come to pass in the last days, that the n
tain of the Lord's house shall be establish
the top of the mountains, and all nations
flow unto it. And many people shall go and
Come ye, and let us go to the mountain o
Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, a
will teach us of his ways, &c. The lofty loo
man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness o
bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be ex
in that day. For the day of the Lord of
shall be upon every one that is proud, &c.
ii. 2, 3. 11, 12. *See* chap. iii. 16. 21. *Mor*
the Lord saith, because the daughters of Zio
haughty, &c.

THE above glorious promise is already full
but will be more fully accomplished in the l
days. Before the completion of it, great spi
and temporal judgments will take place, s
already experience. Pride and haughtiness
prevail among the learned and unlearned,
the description here given of the proud Isra
and their haughty wives. But when the d
God's judgment shall fully come, the lofty
will be humbled, and their haughty daug
stript of their pomp. How many proud w
have experienced this in the late war! On
day shall the Lord at last be known, and
exalted, for the glory will be given to hir
stead of ascribing it, as men now do, whol
themselves, and seeking their own glory.

Let Babel fear when Sion prays,
Babel prepare for long distress;
When Sion's God himself arrays
In terror, and in righteousness.

Woe unto them, that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink, that continue until night, till the wine inflame them. And the harp and the viol, the tabret and pipe, and wine are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the Lord, &c. Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened wide her mouth without measure, &c.—Isa. v. 11, 12. 14. *see ver.* 20, 21. 23.

THE same is the case at present. Men are intent only upon sensual pleasures and gain: and secure amidst the distresses of war, they drink, and play, and dance, and regard not the work of the Lord, that is, his judgments. They enjoy themselves, till the enemy or some other distress is at hand. The moment the danger is over, they return to their sins, and particularly profaning the Lord's day. The vulgar think it impossible to live without merriment and dancing, and the masters of the houses they frequent think it the duty of their calling to get all they can. But it is a sinful gain, and attended with a curse. God here pronounces a woe upon them, and also upon those who think themselves wise, and pervert judgment for a reward. The Israelites were carried away captive; what will become of us, if we do not amend ourselves? Hell has opened her mouth wide. Magistrates should be reminded by these judgments to stop such wanton courses, since even heathens have done it.

Let the unthinking many say
Who will bestow some earthly good?
But, Lord, thy light and love we pray,
Our souls desire this heavenly food.

And one (a seraph) *cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory.*—Isa. vi. 2.

HERE the Seraphim confess and praise the holy Trinity. We should do the same, but with a heart possessed by a holy and lawful reverence, since even the seraphim cover their face and feet before the holiness of God. If God be thus holy, we should likewise be holy, as he saith himself, 1 Peter i. 16; but most men, instead of applying themselves to holiness, make a mock at it. Yet no man shall see God without it; for how can we approach the holy God in heaven with an unholy heart! Would we be holy, we must first turn from every thing sinful and unholy, and seek justification in the blood of the Lamb. If God be the Jehovah Zebaoth, the Lord of hosts, then all the hosts of men should praise him, and ascribe the victory only to him. If all the ends of the earth are filled with his glory, let our hearts also glorify him. But vain glory is now every where predominant: thousands are sacrificed to it, ruined in body and soul, whilst men assume to themselves the aid they receive from God, and rob him of the honour. Preserve us, O my God, from such sacrilege.

Glory to God the Father's name,
Who, from our sinful race,
Chose out his fav'rites to proclaim
The honours of his grace.

Glory to God the Spirit give,
From whose Almighty power;
Our souls their heavenly birth derive
And bless the happy hour.

Glory to God the Son be paid,
Who dwelt in humble clay;
And to redeem us from the dead,
Gave his own life away.

For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still. For the people turneth not to him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of hosts. For the leaders of this people cause them to err, and they that are led of them are destroyed.—Isa. ix. 12, 13. 16. *See* Jer. ii. 30.—***In vain have I smitten your children, they receive no correction.*** On the contrary we read of the Egyptians, Isa. xix. 22. ***And the Lord shall smite Egypt, he shall smite and heal it, and they shall return even to the Lord, and he shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them.***

THE wrath of God still continues to punish and afflict men: they do not turn from their sins to him that smiteth them, and truly repent; God therefore smiteth them because they desire to be freed merely from scourges and plagues, not from sin. Some teachers partake in this guilt, by not pointing out to men the cause of all distress, and showing them, that God seeks their repentance and conversion by means of war, famine, sickness, and other calamities. Did men take warning by these afflictions and troubles, repent and turn unto the Lord, like the Egyptians, to the disgrace of the Israelites, God would soon be intreated of them, heal, help, and deliver them from their distress.

O God, to whom revenge belongs,
Proclaim thy wrath aloud;
Let sovereign power redress our wrongs,
Let justice smite the proud.

But God will ne'er cast off his saints,
Nor his own promise break;
He pardons his inheritance,
For their Redeemer's sake.

And there shall come forth a rod out of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out o And the spirit of the Lord shall rest the spirit of wisdom and understandin of counsel and might, the spirit of kno of the fear of the Lord. They shall n destroy in all my holy mountain; for shall be full of the knowledge of the L waters cover the sea.—Isa. xi. 1, 2. 9.

GRANT, O my Saviour, that I may b upon thee, as the genuine green bran tree of life, and may draw strength an ment from thee, in order to bring f For us, even for me also hast thou re gifts of the Holy Ghost. Grant, that of wisdom and understanding, the counsel and strength, the spirit of kno of the fear of the Lord may rest upo my heart, and all the world be fille knowledge of the Lord, as the waters sea; for thou hast promised this b above passage, and in Habbak. iii. 14 thy promises I plead, fully assured wilt fulfil them.

Hosanna to the royal Son
Of David's ancient line!
His nature's two, his person one,
Mysterious and divine.

Let mortals ne'er refuse to take
Th' Hosannah on their tongues:
Lest rocks and stones shall rise and
Their silence into songs.

O Lord, I will praise thee; though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength, &c. With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. Sing unto the Lord, for he hath done excellent things; this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion; for great is the holy one of Israel in the midst of thee.—Isa. xii. 1—3. 5, 6.

THE whole spiritual Zion, and every penitent soul should repeat the same words in faith, sing praises to their Saviour, and not always complain, much less despair; for the Lord hath turned away his anger also from us, and is comforting us. He is our Saviour, our help, our deliverer and strength; so that we may be secure, and have nothing to fear. With him we cannot perish for want, but shall draw water with joy out of him, the well of salvation; out of his fulness we shall receive grace for grace, and experience that the Holy One of Israel is great, and intimately known unto us. Yes, my Saviour, manifest thyself unto us, as thou dost to thine own people, so gloriously, that we may draw water with joy out of the well of salvation, and know thee to be our Saviour, and our strength, that with thee we may be safe and void of fear, sing praises to thee, and receive comfort even to the hour of death.

Dearest of all the names above,
My Jesus and my God,
Who can resist thy heav'nly love,
Or trifle with thy blood?

In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.—Isa. xxv. 6—9.

THIS glorious promise, already fulfilled in part, will be completely fulfilled, especially in the last times. The counsels of our God (v. 1.) "of old are faithfulness and truth;" that is, he hath always fulfilled all his promises, as the faithful and true God. He will treat us in like manner, make unto us a feast of fat things, and feed our souls abundantly, insomuch that we shall not be ashamed to eat and to drink. He will also swallow up death in our case; we may wait for him with confidence, and be assured that he will help us. Lord, strengthen our faith, that we may eat and drink of thy feast of fat things, be glad and rejoice: so that in the day of trial, having waited for thee, we may experience thine aid in life and in death, and have strong confidence in him who rose from the dead, and swallowed up death in victory.

Come let us lift our voices high,
High as our joys arise;
And join the songs above the sky,
Where pleasure never dies.

With my soul have I desired thee in the night, yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early. Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord. Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us. Lord, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer, when thy chastening was upon them.—Isa. xxvi. 9, 10. 12. 16.

HERE we learn the difference between the children of God, and the children of this world. The former desire none but their Saviour day and night, and trust that he will ordain peace for them, and succour them in both body and soul. When they have done any thing right, they attribute it to him only, give the glory to him, and say, Lord thou hast done this, thou hast given unto us; we have nothing of our own but sin. But the children of this world seek and desire to get rid of trouble, crying anxiously in their distress; yet they care not for Christ, nor for deliverance from sin. Hence the favour shown to them, neither moves them to learn righteousness, nor reforms them; they do evil whether in prosperity or adversity, for they see not the glory of the Lord, how holy a God he is, and how his name is glorified by his judgments and deliverances; being quite blind, and not awakened to repentance, either by the mercies, or the judgments of God.

Now I with all my cares
Will lean upon the Lord;
I'll cast my burdens on his arm,
And rest upon his word.

We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves. Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?—Isa. xxviii. xxix. 15.

THUS at the present time men live securely, as they had made a covenant with death not to come till it suits their convenience, and hell to them hardly a moment's terror. Even in present judgments, they little think what a day of affliction is coming upon them; having recourse to any alluring lie, they trust to that, and soothe themselves with the hope of change for the better, without resolving on their own amendment. They comfort themselves with mere outward appearance and hypocrisy; with false hopes of heaven, whilst they tread the broad way to hell. But God threatens them (ver. 17, 18.) that he will sweep away the refuge of lies, and disannul the covenant with death, as well as their trust in men and human covenants; as we read, chap. viii. 12. "Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy," and chap. xxx. 7. "The Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose." Thus it is our duty, in every distress, to take refuge in Christ: so shall we be protected by him in affliction and in death.

Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. When the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then he shall be trodden down by it. Morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night, and it shall be a vexation, only to understand the report.—Isa. xxviii. 16. 18, 19.

WHOEVER takes refuge in Christ in the time of trouble, and by true faith humbly rests upon him as the tried corner stone, shall stand fast, and not run here and there for safety, help, and comfort, finding in Christ every necessary support in affliction, and even in death. Most men satisfy themselves with various false comforts, and groundless hopes of salvation. To these, God sends an overflowing scourge of troubles, to take away their false dependence, and lead them to understand the report. Luther says, "Tribulation makes good Christians." Rom. v. 3. "For tribulation worketh patience." Untried men are inexperienced, vain, useless theorists. What can they know? yet they deceive the world. O that our days were free from such speculative deceivers, who are said (chap. xxix 20.) to watch for iniquity.

See what a living stone
The builders did refuse!
Yet God has built his church thereon,
In spite of envious Jews.

Hosanna to the King
Of David's royal blood:
Bless him, ye saints: he comes to bring
Salvation from your God.

Therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be grac unto you; and therefore will he be exalted, he may have mercy upon you: for the Lord God of judgment; blessed are all they that for him. For the people shall dwell in Zion Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he wil very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy when he shall hear it, he will answer thee. birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend J salem; defending also he will deliver it, passing over he will preserve it.—Isa. xxx. 18, xxxi 5.

We read in the 17th verse of a dreadful ju ment, when a thousand shall flee at the reb of one. In the next we read, "Therefore the Lord wait that he may be gracious u you;" that is, his judgments and punishm must prevent your false refuge in Egypt, you may with penitent hearts take refug him, and he may then be gracious unto you succour you. Thus judgments and tribulat are only God's waiting, that he may be grac unto us: for God is a God of judgment, does not usually shew mercy, till he hath h bled us by his afflictions. We should there in return wait upon God, and continually upon him, so will he be gracious unto us, cover us with his wings, as belonging to spiritual Zion and Jerusalem; he will defend deliver us, and take care of us in our churc our houses, and hearts, like a good father family, rectify what is amiss, supply wha wanting, and assist us in all things; for acc *ing to* Rev. ii. 1. he walketh in the midst of *seven golden* candlesticks.

I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul. Behold, for peace I had great bitterness; but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.—Isa. xxxviii. 15. 17.

THESE were the words of king Hezekiah, when God had delivered him from a grievous sickness, and heard his prayer. The Lord will in like manner hear and help us when we are distressed. But we should be principally concerned about the forgiveness of our sins, the deliverance of our souls; not merely about bodily relief. So shall the Lord graciously regard our souls, cast all our sins behind his back, and remember them no more. After this he will relieve our temporal necessities, and deliver us from sickness and other affliction, or at least render them tolerable, yea beneficial to us. Whenever trouble besets us and continues, we may be assured, that the Lord waits to be gracious unto us, and is preparing to succour us. He only qualifies us by distress for relief, that we may afterwards be thankful to him, and in future avoid whatever may occasion the like fatherly correction; for with the best resolution we may soon forget his succour, as Hezekiah (chap. xxxix.) soon after lifted up his heart, when he shewed all his treasures to the ambassadors of the king of Babylon.

When we are rais'd from deep distress,
Our God deserves a song;
We take the pattern of our praise
From Hezekiah's tongue.

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare (her burthensome worship) *is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins;* (that is, says Luther, forgiveness of sins and deliverance from the law of Moses, free grace for sin, life for death.) *The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.*—Isa. xl. 1—3.

God will certainly comfort us, if we are his people: therefore we read the word repeated, "comfort ye, comfort ye my people." He will likewise cause us to be spoken to comfortably, for he himself is a comforter. He will also forgive our sins, and give us double for our sins; that is, forgiveness and the Holy Ghost; and consequently power over sin, or righteousness, and strength. So shall no law either condemn, threaten, or compel us as slaves. But at the same time he points out to us the order in which we must prepare the way of the Lord, by true repentance, humbling every thing exalted within us, confessing our condition as sinners, and desiring only grace: so shall we certainly obtain grace, forgiveness, comfort and peace. May God give us this repentance unto life!

Dear Lord! behold our sore distress,
Our sins attempt to reign;
Stretch out thine arm of conquering grace,
And let thy foes be slain.

If thou despise a mortal groan,
Yet hear a Saviour's blood;
An advocate so near the throne,
Pleads and prevails with God.

Fear not thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel: I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the holy one of Israel. Behold I will make thee a new sharp thrashing instrument (thou shalt not thrash more straw, it shall yield corn.) *Thou shalt fan them, &c.* (thine enemies) *and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the holy one of Israel. When the poor and needy seek water and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, &c. I will make the wilderness a pool of water.*—Isa. xli. 14—18. See chap. xlii. 15, 16.

THOUGH a believer should consider himself but a weak worm, whom the enemy can easily tread upon, yet ought he not to fear. This worm shall become a thrashing instrument which shall scatter the enemy. How is this done? Thus: the enemy steps forth boldly, and means to crush him at one blow. The poor worm twists and bends, but sighs and prays; which an enemy engaged in an unjust cause cannot do. Then the Holy One of Israel fights for it; and it will appear whose is the victory. If we feel ourselves as a dark and dry desert, he will make us springs of water, and turn our darkness into light. Let us therefore be comforted and pray: Lord, preserve me, thy worm, scatter the proud enemy, defeat the power of Satan. Let thy light secure us from all darkness, and if we be ever so dry, open thou the fountains of life.

God shall preserve my soul from fear,
Or shield me when afraid;
Ten thousand angels must appear,
If he command their aid.

A bruised reed he shall not break: and the smoking flax shall he not quench, &c. I will *give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, &c. I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not, I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.*—Isa. xlii. 3. 6, 7. 16.

THOUGH our faith should be like a bruised reed and smoking flax, Jesus will not wholly break or quench it. He will not do this, for his eyes behold our faith; therefore he will by all means strengthen, and rather inflame than extinguish it. He is set up by God as a light to the Gentiles, consequently to us. He will open our blind eyes, and bring us out of the dark prison; and though we are as ignorant of our way, in spirituals and temporals, as if we were blind, he will lead us in paths which we have not known, he will make darkness light before us, that the grossest darkness and heaviest trial will be for our good, and become a light unto us, that we need not grope in the dark, but may walk in the light of his countenance. These things will he do unto us, and ever go before us as our light, and not forsake us.

Jesus, my God! I know his name,
His name is all my trust;
Nor will he put my soul to shame,
Nor let my hope be lost.

Then will he own my worthless name
Before his Father's face:
And in the new Jerusalem
Appoint my soul a place.



Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee, &c. Fear not, for I am with thee, &c. There is none that can deliver out of my hand; I will work, and who shall let it? Thus saith the Lord, which maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters. Behold, I will do a new thing: now it shall spring forth, shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.—Isa. xliii. 4, 5. 13. 16. 19.

God gave this glorious promise to the people of Israel, but still more does it apply to spiritual Israel in the new covenant, and to each faithful soul. We too are precious to God in Christ, if we believe, and shall be honourable, even though we should be afflicted; for God gloriously delivers the afflicted, and saith also unto us, "I have loved thee;" for he hath made us dear and acceptable to himself in Christ his beloved. We therefore need not fear, for the Lord is with us, he will bless us, and say of us even at this time, "Bring my sons from far." He himself will work in us every good, and no one shall prevent it, however impossible it may seem. For he who maketh a way in the sea, can do all things: he can convert the wilderness of our hearts, and turn dry lands into springs of water.

Up to the Lord, that reigns on high,
And views the nations from afar,
Let everlasting praises fly,
And tell how large his bounties are.

Our sorrows and our tears we pour
Into the bosom of our God:
He bears us in the mournful hour,
And helps us bear the heavy load.



Fear not, O Jacob, my servant, &c. For I water upon him that is thirsty, and flo the dry ground: I will pour my spirit seed, and my blessing upon thine offsp they shall spring up as among the gra lows by the water courses! One shall the Lord's: and another shall call him name of Jacob: and another shall subs his hand unto the Lord, and surname the name of Israel.—Isa. xliv. 2—5.

THIS promise respects particularly the tament, and therefore shall and will cer fulfilled in us, provided we are thirsty, wish to be so and pray for it. The H shall be poured out plentifully upon fountain of life. Lord, fulfil all these us, that we may call ourselves by th our life and conversation; and subs selves to thee as an eternal heritage, prepared, fear nothing.

See where the great incarnate God
Fills a majestic throne;
While from the skies his awful voice
Bears the last judgment down.

Such favours as a God can give,
My royal grace bestows;
Ye thirsty souls, come taste the strea
Where life and pleasure flows.

I am the first, and I the last,
Through endless years the same;
I am, is my memorial still,
And my eternal name.

The lamb shall lead his heav'nly flock
Where living waters rise;
And love divine shall wipe away
The sorrow of their eyes.

I am the Lord, and there is none else, I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things. Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the Lord have created it. (Therefore) *look unto me, and be ye saved all ye ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.*—Isa. xlv. 6—8. 22.

We find it repeated no less than eight times in this chapter, that God only is the Lord, and none else, and that he alone doth all things in spirituals and temporals. He inflicts evils, war, sickness, and other plagues, and he alone giveth victory and peace. We should therefore look for every thing from him alone, and ascribe every thing to him. Else all projects of peace, and other means of relief from our distress, will become fruitless. But if we expect peace, or health, or deliverance from calamities at the hand of God, we must turn to him alone with true contrition, and (chap xlvii. 7.) lay these things to our heart, remember our sins, and pray for forgiveness and change of disposition. By these means we shall surely be saved, the heavens will drop down nothing but righteousness unto us, and make us faithful; after which we may depend on temporal aid and peace, health and other blessings, in as great a degree as shall be for the glory of God and our good.

O bless the Lord my soul!
Let all within me join,
And aid my tongue to bless his name,
Whose favours are divine.

Bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors! I knew that thou wouldst deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb. For my name's sake, will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake will I do it; for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another.—Isa. xlvi. 8. xlviii. 8—11.

In order to obtain spiritual and temporal aid, we must repent; that is, our hearts must be changed: we must therefore look into ourselves, not merely confess gross vices, but the evil heart, the inward corruption: and deeply humbling ourselves before God, acknowledge that we are transgressors from our mother's womb. We must also seek and pray for a constant supply of grace, in the name, in the blood and merits of Jesus, that the Lord may be long-suffering and gracious, and help us for his name's sake. And this he will do, though we of ourselves are unworthy of it. If we are afraid that he will leave us, which we have well deserved, our comfort is, that he will help us for his name's sake, lest he and his name should be polluted. But we must remember to ascribe the glory to him and his name alone, for he will not give his glory to another.

O what a stiff rebellious house
Was Jacob's ancient race!
False to their own most solemn vows,
And to their Maker's grace.

The Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. Thy children shall make haste; thy destroyers, and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with their face towards the earth, &c., and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.—Isa. xlix. 13. 17. 23.

WHEN Zion imagines herself to be quite deserted and forgotten, as appears ver. 14, God comforts, and assures her, that he will have mercy upon his afflicted, and cannot forget them, though a woman should forget her sucking child; that he has graven them upon the palms of his hands, and that their walls, their spiritual edifice, are continually before him. Therefore their children, or builders, that is, all faithful servants of God, should make haste, but their destroyers, the hirelings and wolves, shall go forth; yea, the time shall come, when kings shall be her nursing fathers, &c. Then it is that Zion and every faithful soul shall fully experience that the Lord is our God, and they shall not be ashamed that wait for him; for none, no not even one, is put to confusion, that waits for God.

Now shall thy inward joys arise,
And burst into a song;
Almighty love inspires my heart,
And pleasure tunes my tongue.

God on his thirsty Sion hill
Some mercy drops has thrown;
And solemn oaths have bound his love
To shed salvation down.

*is among you that feareth the Lord, that obey-
the voice of his servant, that walketh in dark-
ss and hath no light? Let him trust in the
me of the Lord, and stay upon his God. My
vation shall be for ever, and my righteousness
ll not be abolished. I am he that comforteth
: who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid
a man, &c. I have put my words into thy
uth, and have covered thee in the shadow of
ne hand.*—Isa. l. 10. li. 6. 12. 16.

EN in the day of temptation we walk in the
, we must quite disregard ourselves, and not
upon any thing within us, but upon God
, and upon the name of the Lord; trust
in the grace of God, and righteousness of
st, and adhere to his word, whatever our
ngs may be. Our best sensations and gifts
totally vanish from us, but the name of the
l (the grace of God and righteousness of
st, both which are comprehended in the
e of the Lord) shall be for ever. And this
eousness of Christ will not suffer us to des-
l. We being justified in Christ, need not
our a servile fear of God, much less of men.
Lord will comfort us, put his words in our
t and mouth, and cover us under the over-
ding shadow of his wings.

Blest is the man, for ever blest,
Whose guilt is pardon'd by his God;
Whose sins with sorrow are confess'd,
And cover'd with his Saviour's blood.

From guile his heart and lips are free,
His humble joy, his holy fear,
With deep repentance well agree,
And join to prove his faith sincere.



All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong: because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors.—Isa. liii. 6. 11, 12.

THE words, which are thrice repeated here, that the Lamb of God bare our sins, should work in us true repentance, and humble us, when we consider, that the holy, pure, and innocent Lamb of God condescended to bear our sin and disgrace, in order to save us. If, like true penitents, we felt the weight of our sins, we should comfort ourselves with this truth so repeatedly enforced, and be assured, that the Lamb of God has borne them, and atoned for them, that he has paid for and removed them, and perfectly justified us; so that if we know him and believe in him, we shall not incur any judgment; for we are (ver 8.) taken from distress and judgment together with him. His intercession too is comfortable to us. Having interceded for malefactors on the cross, he will intercede for us, and prevent our incurring death like criminals, for he was reckoned among the transgressors, and surrendered himself unto death for our sake. This is a comfort on our death-bed.

They seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God, &c. Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save! neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.—Isa. lviii. 2. lix. 1, 2.

THERE are many, in appearance good sort of men, who are still secure in sin. These, when involved in distress, seek God, but not as penitent sinners; they seek him, as if they had fulfilled all righteousness, or at least not been remarkable sinners, and wonder, perhaps, that God should afflict them, and presume to plead their own cause with God. When their distress is aggravated, they grow desperate, and imagine his hand to be shortened, that it cannot save, and that his ear cannot hear; but their sins are the real cause of separation between him and them. And as every sin adds a stone to this wall of separation, how large, strong, firm, and high must that wall become, and how difficult the conversion, unless we turn from our sins betimes. Hear, therefore, O man, and that soon. O that thou mayest be enabled to remove the partition wall this very evening, that thou mayest not be separated from God for ever; but find him here continually near at hand, to assist thee in body and soul.

'Tis faith that conquers earth and hell,
By a celestial power:
This is the grace that shall prevail
In the decisive hour.

I have set watchmen upon thy wall, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence; and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.—Isa. lxii. 6, 7.

THIS promise, which is already, and still continues to be fulfilled, shall be more gloriously completed in the latter day. All the children of God should not only daily pray for such faithful labourers and watchmen, but themselves also watch over their own heart and house. All teachers especially should rouse themselves by this, and not be as dumb dogs, it being so frequently repeated, that the watchman will not keep silence. They must take heed not to be drowsy or asleep; for a sleeping watchman is a contradiction. A teacher thereof must be converted and vigilant, not merely for his own sake, but for the sake of his congregation, whom he should awaken; for till he is truly converted, he continues asleep and insensible of danger, and how should he awaken others? But some, as we read, chap. xxix. 20, watch only for iniquity, by their false doctrine, their works and disputes, hating, oppressing, hindering and troubling other faithful servants of God.

The Lord makes bare his arm,
Through all the earth abroad;
Let every nation now behold
Their Saviour and their God.

How blessed are our eyes,
That see this heavenly light;
Prophets and kings desir'd it long,
But died without the sight.

Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry; behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth trouble, &c. But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word.—Isa. lv. 13. 23. lxvi. 2. See lxi. 6. 8.

THUS in religion, and in the service of God, there are many enjoyments; we, as it were, both eat and drink, therefore God repeatedly calls upon us, Isa. lv. 1. 2. to come and buy and eat without money. Our poverty shall not exclude us from this; for we read, Psalm xxii. 26. "The meek shall eat and be satisfied." The Lord promises a happy year to the poor, and to comfort all that are afflicted in Sion. He looks graciously upon the poor, and upon those who are of a contrite spirit and tremble at his word, lest they should transgress it; he will dwell in them, and enliven every thing in and through them. Nor shall their labour in vain; the Lord will take care to ensure their labours, and to bless them, that they may assist in gloriously building up the kingdom of God: for God doth great things by means of the poor and meek.

Let us adore th' eternal word,
'Tis he our souls hath fed:
Thou art our living stream, O Lord,
And thou th' immortal bread.

Our souls should draw their heav'nly breath,
Whilst Jesus finds supplies:
Nor shall our graces sink to death,
For Jesus never dies.



Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee; know therefore and see, that it is an evil thing, and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee. Why trimmest thou thy way to seek love? therefore hast thou also taught the wicked ones thy ways. Yet thou sayest, because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me; behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned. Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed, &c.—Jer. ii. 19. 33. 35. iii. 12, 13.

GOD threatens to punish sinners, but they not believing it, must experience it. If therefore various punishments, sorrows, and troubles befall us, we should remember to impute them to our disobedience. We must not palliate our actions, and fancy ourselves innocent, as if we had not sinned and deserved our sufferings; lest God should afflict us more severely, till we confess all our sins before him, and turn again to the Lord. Then will God soon substitute mercy in the place of justice; for, says Luther, "were it possible for the damned in hell humbly to acknowledge their guilt, and sincerely repent, they would obtain mercy."

Mighty Redeemer! set me free
From my old state of sin:
Oh make my soul alive to thee,
Create new pow'rs within.

Far from the regions of the dead,
From sin, and earth, and hell,
In the new world that grace has made,
I would for ever dwell.

Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord, for I am married unto you. If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the Lord, return unto me. Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart. O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth?—Jer. iii. 14. iv. 1. 4. 14. v. 3.

TRUE conversion is necessary to all who would be saved; for all have sinned; it is likewise possible, and in the end easy and pleasant: for Christ is betrothed to him who is converted, he will betroth and bind himself to him: there is nothing difficult or formidable in this, and it should induce all to be truly converted; for every conversion is not of the right sort. Some are partially reformed, leaving off one or the other particular sin, which is attended with mischief and disgrace. Others become converts merely to men, to their pious parents, masters or teachers, and are religious, whilst in their presence. Others again go no farther than Moses and the law. Whereas we should turn from all, even our bosom sins, and that heartily, with our whole heart; we should circumcise the heart and wash it, and evidence that we are actually converted, by a becoming application of Christ! for the eyes of God are upon our faith, that is the most essential part of our conversion, and renders it acceptable.

Great King of glory and of grace!
We own with humble shame,
How vile is our degenerate race,
And our first father's name.



Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it.—Jer. v. 1.

How corrupt must have been the holy city, in which hardly a good man was to be found. The same has been the case with many other cities, now inhabited by the Turks. Other places, where the kingdom of God once flourished, may share the same fate. When the old faithful witnesses depart, a new and perverse generation of teachers may arise, who may overturn every thing. This is the greatest spiritual judgment, and temporal judgments soon follow. But we have an instance in this, how precious the faithful are in the sight of God; since he often spares a whole city, for the sake of only one. Such was that poor wise man, described in Eccles. ix. 15, who delivered a city, yet no man remembered him. Christians, says Luther, bear up the world by their prayer, and are the feet of the world, but are obliged to tread in the filth of profaneness. O how criminal is the world, in making a mock at devout Christians. They attack the apple of God's eye. However this word is comfortable in the present judgments; indeed it was particularly so to a certain Christian in the late distresses of war; God sees more than one among us, who concerns himself about the faith, and steps into the breach by prayer.

By nature all are gone astray,
Their practice all the same;
There's none that fears his Maker's hand,
There's none that loves his name.

Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock, they have refused to return. They have belied the Lord, and said, It is not he, neither shall evil come upon us. For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them, every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest, every one dealeth falsely. They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace.—Jer. v. 3. 12. vi. 13, 14.

THIS blindness and security prevails also in the midst of our present judgments. God strikes men, but they feel it not; they feel perhaps the blows, the bodily distress, but are insensible to sin, the evil of their souls, for which they are stricken. They would fain get rid of their troubles, but not of sin, from whence they spring; they continue hardened, and will not turn. They forget the God that strikes them, and means to lead them to repentance; they look only upon men; reproaching them and saying, it is not he (our God), he doth it not, the enemy doth it, and he will deliver us from him; evil shall not come upon us, the times will mend; and yet they will not amend themselves. In the midst of this security and delusive hope, the false comforters and preachers of peace come to their aid, then they grow more careless, and will not suffer their calamity to awaken them to repentance.

When desolation like a flood,
O'er the proud sinner rolls;
Saints find a refuge in their God,
For he redeem'd their souls.



Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, which exercise loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.—Jer. ix. 23, 24.

He who values himself upon his wisdom, learning, and other endowments, and despises other men, especially the servants of God, is a proud fool, and will be confounded, with all his pretended wisdom and learning; for the Lord cutteth off the wise in their wisdom. And he who relies upon his strength, might, power, and fortitude, and attributes to himself his exploits, will be confounded: for he robs God of the honour due to him alone, which Jehovah will by no means suffer. The Christian glories only in his Saviour, in his grace and mercy, making him his only wisdom and strength, ascribing to him every mercy, and saying with a great king: all that we have done was thy mercy. This is acceptable to God. Lord, grant that we may acknowledge and praise thee as our gracious and merciful God, depend upon thy grace, and so become perfectly acceptable to thee.

Let others boast how strong they be,
Nor death nor danger fear;
But we'll confess, O Lord to thee,
What feeble things we are.

While we have breath to use our tongues,
Our Maker we'll adore;
His Spirit moves our heaving lungs;
Or they would breathe no more.

There is none like unto thee, O Lord; thou art great, and thy name is great in might. Who would not fear thee, O king of nations? for to thee doth it appertain, &c. O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.—Jer. x. 6, 7. 23.

YES, O my God, thou alone art great; magnify thyself therefore, I beseech thee, in my heart, and make thyself known unto me, as great, exalted, and glorious, that I may fear thee with all my heart, and obey thee. And as I know that the actions and designs of men are not in their own power, do thou lead my steps, in all my ways, in great matters and small, according to thy counsel, and in every design and undertaking, give me understanding and power, for to thee alone doth it appertain to direct my steps. And, as thou knowest my weakness in suffering, strengthen me, I beseech thee, and chastise me, but with mercy, that thou mayest destroy my sins, not me, and that I may, by thy chastisement, the sooner attain to thy salvation.

Shall the vile race of flesh and blood,
Contend with their Creator God;
Shall mortal worms presume to be
More holy, wise, or just than he?

Almighty power, to thee we bow,
How frail are we, how glorious thou!
No more the sons of earth shall dare
With an eternal God compare.

And if thou say in thine heart, wherefore come these things upon me? (Answer,) *for the greatness of thine iniquity, are thy skirts discovered, and thy heels made bare.* Therefore the penitent cry, *O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake. Why shouldst thou be as a man astonished, and as a mighty man, that cannot save? We look for peace, and there is no good. We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers. Do not abhor us, for thy name's sake.*—Jer. xiii. 22. xiv. 7. 9. 19—21.

In time of war and other calamities, men are apt to ask themselves: wherefore come these things upon me? They know not how to account for it, or what fault of theirs is the occasion of it, considering themselves good Christians. But, they ought to recollect, that God may answer: "For the greatness of thine iniquity." We should not esteem ourselves innocent, but humbly acknowledge and confess our sins, saying: "Lord! our iniquities testify against us, but do thou save us for thy name's sake;" then shall we enjoy peace and deliverance, and not till then. Though we may hope for peace and deliverance, we can obtain no good, unless we first seek peace with God, and deliverance from our spiritual disorders.

My heart, how dreadful hard it is!
How heavy here it lies;
Heavy and cold within my breast
Just like a rock of ice!

If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before me: and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth; let them return unto me, but return not thou unto them. And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brazen wall, and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee, for I am with thee to save thee, and to deliver thee.—Jer. xv. 19, 20.

THIS affords both instruction and comfort to preachers and others. The instruction is, that they should adhere to God, teach the good to separate themselves from the bad, not supposing all their hearers to be the children of God, but showing them the difference, and having no participation in the works of the ungodly. The comfort is, that God will powerfully protect, and make them a fenced, brazen wall, delivering them from all their enemies, who, instead of bringing them over, shall return to them. But this is likewise a comfort to all Christian masters, magistrates, and parents, who build up the kingdom of God by their life and conversation, and thus incur many enemies. They may persevere comfortably in their labours, their prayers, and their sufferings.

Judge me, O Lord, and prove my ways,
And try my reins and try my heart;
My faith upon thy promise stays,
Nor from thy law my feet depart.



I have taken away my peace from the people, saith the Lord. For behold, ye walk every one after the imaginations of his evil heart, that they may not hearken unto me. For mine eyes are upon all their ways; they are not hid from my face, &c. The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond. Behold, I frame evil against you, return ye now every one from his evil way. And they said, There is no hope, but we will walk after our own devices.—Jer. xvi. 5. 12. 17. xvii. 1. xviii. 11, 12.

WHY should we wonder that God hath taken away peace from us, since every one lives according to the imagination of his own evil heart, and acts as if God did not see, or had forgotten his sins? But his eyes are upon all our sinful ways, and sin is engraven with the point of a diamond upon the tablet of the heart. If some sinners did but know the judgment which God is preparing for them, and the evil which shall befal them on account of their sins, they would repent this very evening! but they will not believe. It may be said of their repentance and amendment, "There is no hope." But that which they now refuse to believe, will, by woeful experience, be forced upon them.

Our heart, that flinty stubborn thing,
That terrors cannot move,
That fears no threat'nings of his wrath,
May be dissolv'd by love,

Thus saith the Lord, cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green, and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.—Jer. xvii. 5. 7, 8.

He who relies upon himself, his own wisdom and learning, or upon other men, is accursed. Thus saith the Lord, therefore, it will certainly come to pass. Such a man "shall be (v. 6,) like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh;" for he commits idolatry, and robs God of his honour, which God will not suffer to go unpunished. How little do men reflect that confidence in man is so great and accursed a sin. But how great is the comfort of him who trusteth in the Lord! He is like a tree planted by the waters, his leaves shall not wither, that is, the fruit of his good works shall attend him to eternity. He brings forth fruit without ceasing, inward fruits of the Spirit in his own soul, and fruits in other men; whatsoever he doeth it shall prosper.

Trust him, ye saints, in all your ways,
Pour out our hearts before his face:
When helpers fail, and foes invade,
God is our all-sufficient aid.



Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong (by ill-gotten goods,) *that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work.*—Jer. xxii. 13. The son of Sirach says, Eccles. xxxiv. 22, *He that defraudeth the labourer of his hire is a bloodshedder.*

He commits a crying sin, Jam. v. 4, in not giving him that which he hath earned with his sweat and blood. But we should at the same time reflect upon Jesus, the great labourer, who laboured in his soul with a bloody sweat, for the sake of our souls; therefore God hath given him a great multitude as his property, his reward, his beloved lot and inheritance. Who are they that constitute this reward, this property? All those who by true conversion, come to him, whom the Father hath given him. Hence all pastors should be encouraged to lead many souls to Jesus, as his property, his reward, lest he should require their blood at their hands. But every careless sinner, who refuses to turn from all his sins to Jesus, and to devote himself to him is a bloodshedder; he defraudeth the great Labourer of his hire. Let him therefore turn from his sins, and devote himself this very evening to his Saviour, praying with me; O my Saviour, convert me to thee from all my sins, with all my heart, for I desire to be thine, to continue thine alone, and no one's else, here and for ever. Amen.

Deep in our hearts let us record
The deeper sorrows of our Lord;
Behold the rising billows roll
To overwhelm his holy soul.

I will give them a heart to know that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.—Jer. xxiv. 7. *See* xxix. 13, *and* xxiii. 1. *I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, &c., and I will pardon all their iniquities, &c.*

HERE we see how necessary it is that we should turn from all our sins with our whole heart. We must not reserve a single sin, nor make any condition. God requires the heart, the whole heart, for he will not accept a part of it. We likewise see the possibility of such a total surrender of the heart; for God himself will give us a heart to know him, and whoso truly knoweth him, will readily devote to him his whole heart. Here we have a clear promise, "They shall return unto me with their whole heart;" then will God cleanse us from all iniquity, and turn us, that it neither shall condemn us, nor have the dominion over us. We see, in the last place, by what means such a total conversion becomes possible, and what we are to do on our part. Namely, we are to pray, Turn thou us, O Lord, &c. We are not to content ourselves merely with the devotions of the morning and evening, but frequently to pour out our hearts before God. Then we may hope for success.

How heavy is the night
That hangs upon our eyes,
'Till Christ with his reviving light,
Over our souls arise!



This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.—Jer. xxxi. 33, 34.

In the Old Testament God seemingly compelled the Israelites; there was no willing mind on their part. Therefore God promises (v. 31.) to make a new covenant, under which all the coercive means of the law were to cease, and a willing mind was to be given. We live under the new covenant, under which God himself will write his law in our hearts, and make us willing, that we, who are by nature the very reverse of the law, may now have the law itself within us. And we shall all know him from the least unto the greatest. This is a great and comfortable promise; for we are all of us by nature blind towards God, his love and his grace. But God himself will lead us to this knowledge, which, according to 2 Pet. i. is the means of multiplying grace and peace unto us, and thus render it very possible for us willingly to obey the divine law: for God will not only pardon all our sins, but in his mercy not even remember them any more.

God from the caves of earth and hell
Can take the hardest stones,
And fill the house of Abraham well
With new created sons.

I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them and of their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them, to do them good.—Jer. xxxii. 39—41.

THIS glorious promise extends to the New Testament, and therefore concerns us. First, we see the possibility of a true repentance, change, and conversion of the heart, or of a genuine fear of God; for God will give us, and work in us, all this, so that man is without excuse. God is called, ch. xxxii. 19, "Great in counsel and mighty in work;" and as such he saith unto us, v. 27, "Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh; is there anything too hard for me?" Christians are comforted by these words, and pray with greater confidence. Yes, O my God, give unto us one heart, that we and our children may fear thee for ever; and thou wilt not fail to do us good, according to thine eternal covenant of grace. Inspire therefore our hearts, and the hearts of our children, with thy fear, that we may not depart from thee, but may rejoice to do good, and continue thy blessed people for ever and ever. Amen.

Firm as the earth his promise stands,
And he can well secure
What I've committed to his hands
'Gainst the decisive hour.



This man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt. They are not humbled, even unto this day. Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart. O thou sword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be quiet? put up thyself in thy scabbard, rest and be still. How can it be quiet, seeing the Lord hath given it a charge?—Jer. xxxviii. 4. xliv. 10. xlix. 16. xlvii. 6, 7.

He who in times of war, and other calamities, admonishes men to true repentance, warning them of greater punishments and plagues, is considered by the world as one who is unconcerned for the public good, and no true patriot. The children of this world expect nothing but soothing and comfortable words, though they remain unhumbled by their distress even unto this day; others rely upon their rocks and castles, their forts and superior power. God will plunge them headlong into ruin. If we wish the sword to be put into the scabbard, and other plagues and troubles to cease, we must look up to the hand of the Lord, and humble ourselves penitently under it; upon this condition, and no other, shall we be saved.

In God most holy, just, and true,
I have repos'd my trust;
Nor will I fear what flesh can do,
The offspring of the dust.

Shall they escape without thy frown?
Must their devices stand?
O cast the haughty sinner down,
And let him know thy hand.

Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not? Out of the mouth of the Most High proceedeth not evil and good. Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins. Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our hearts with our hands unto God in the heavens. We have transgressed, and have rebelled: thou hast not pardoned.—Lament. iii. 37—42.

O THAT men would not put their confidence merely in man during the distress of war and other troubles, but look up to God, and believe that nothing comes to pass without his command, as David confessed, when Shimei cursed him. We ought to remember that good and evil, distress and deliverance come only from the Lord. We should not therefore murmur against men, or reproach them, much less should we murmur against God, for this is only increasing our trouble. Every man should murmur against his sins, and no man should esteem himself innocent; every man should reflect and inquire what it is in him that God designs to punish by the evils of war, or sickness, or other troubles. Perhaps he has been too much lifted up in peaceable times, or in the days of health, and indulged himself in pride, vanity, and luxury, and has been unmindful of, or even perhaps oppressive to the poor, committed much injustice, and sinned in the enjoyment and use of his health.

Lord, where shall guilty souls retire
Forgotten and unknown?
In hell they meet thy dreadful ire,
In heaven thy glorious throne.



And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, &c. I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thy hands.—Ezek. ii. 6. iii. 17, 18.

ALL ministers of God's word should duly observe this. God having twice enforced it to a pious prophet, how much more ought other faithful teachers to consider it a warning to them. Still more should unconverted teachers tremble at it; for they are in the sleep of death, and not true watchmen; he cannot watch over the souls of others, who doth not watch over his own soul, and thus many souls will perish through his neglect. God requires their blood at his hands. It is evident to the lowest capacity how necessary it is for a teacher to be enlightened and converted for the sake of his congregation; which truth ought to awaken all teachers, fathers of families, and other persons in authority. Lord, awaken thou both preachers and hearers; and grant that every one may watch over his own house and heart, so that he may be delivered and saved.

Though I have griev'd thy spirit, Lord,
His help and comfort still afford;
And let a wretch come near thy throne
To plead the merits of thy Son.

Where (in the temple) *was the seat of the image of jealousy. For they say, the Lord seeth us not. He said also unto me, Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do. Therefore will I also deal in fury, &c. And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh, and that cry for all the abominations that are done in the midst thereof. Slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children, and women; but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary.*—Exek. viii. 3. 12. 18. ix. 4. 6.

How many images of jealousy or vexation are seated in the temple of the heart as well as in the outward temple! Men imagine in their abominations that the Lord doth not see them. Therefore the Lord, at this time, dealeth in fury with many countries, cities, and people; in some places he spares not even those who belong to his sanctuary. O that all preachers and hearers, old and young, might be awakened by this to repentance, and moved first to lament their own sins, and then to mourn over the abominations in the land! for the Lord will, in that case, mark and seal them, that the instruments of divine vengeance may not touch them. Let every one therefore be found earnest in prayer.

My God, in whom are all the springs
Of boundless love and grace unknown,
Hide me beneath thy spreading wings,
Till the dark cloud is overblown.



Son of man, what is that proverb that ye have in the land of Israel, saying, The days are prolonged and every vision faileth? I will make this proverb to cease, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel. The days are at hand, and the effects of every vision. For I am the Lord; and the word that I speak shall come to pass.—Ezek. xii. 22, 23. 25.

When God delays the help he has promised, or the just punishment he has threatened, men are disposed to think that both will fail. When (chap. xiii.) the prophets or teachers say, Peace, and there is no peace; when (ver. 2,) they are daubers who daub with untempered mortar; and (ver. 18.) when they sew pillows to all arm-holes; then infidelity, false faith, and security will increase. God denounces a woe against such careless daubers, and false comforters; therefore let every one believe, that what God threatens will come to pass, unless repentance intervene; though, according to chap. xiv. 14. these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in a land, yet they would not be able to turn away the judgments threatened. But the penitent may assuredly comfort himself with the hope of God's promised aid.

O for a word from Sion's King,
Her captives to restore:
Jacob with all the tribes shall sing,
And Judah weep no more.

When I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live, &c. Then washed I thee with water: yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil. I clothed thee also with broidered work. And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty. But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, &c.—Ezek. xvi. 6, 9, 10. 14, 15.

God's dealings with his people Israel extend to the spiritual Israelites, to us Christians. He hath washed us in baptism with pure water, and hath clothed us with a beautiful garment, with Christ himself. But how corrupt are Christians at present! They are fallen off from their beauty and excellency above the other nations; hence arise the present judgments, in order to punish degenerate Christendom. But to those that humble themselves, and penitently confess that they lie in their blood, and that no man can help them, the Lord saith, even now, Live. It is to thee, even to thee, O penitent sinner, that the Lord saith, at this time, this evening, Live. Jesus will wash, deck, adorn, and render thee beautiful; and then thou mayest safely trust in his beauty, in which he himself delights and rejoices.

Angels, assist our mighty joys,
Strike all your harps of gold,
But when you raise your highest notes,
His love can ne'er be told.



Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom. Pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and the needy; and they were haughty, &c. Neither hath Samaria committed half of thy sins, &c. Nevertheless, I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant. Then thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.—Exek. xvi. 49—51. 60, 61. 63.

THE people at Jerusalem were so corrupt, that God calls Sodom their sister, and even says, that, in comparison with the former, Sodom and Gomorrah appear righteous. Then if God has distinguished a people by his favours, and they nevertheless depart from him, their sins become greater than the pride of Sodom. And what is the state of things among us? In time of peace we are wanton and luxurious, and neglect the poor; therefore God hath taken away peace from us, in order to punish the rich. But he will still remember the covenant, and turn, forgive, and succour us, then shall we be ashamed: and this shame is the genuine mark of true repentance.

Lord, if thou dost not soon appear,
Virtue and truth will flee away:
A faithful man amongst us here,
Will scarce be found, if thou delay.

The soul that sinneth it shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, &c. If the wicked will turn from all his sins, &c., he shall surely live, he shall not die. But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, shall he live? (Therefore) *cast away from you all transgressions, &c., and make you a new heart and a new spirit, &c. For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God; wherefore, turn yourselves, and live ye.*—Ezek. xviii. 20, 21. 24. 31. 32.

THUS repentance and conversion are indispensably necessary; for he that sinneth, and doth not turn from his sins, shall die. But after this, daily repentance and conversion, or perseverance, are likewise necessary: for he that turneth away from his righteousness shall also die; all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned. We see, moreover, the nature of true conversion. It must be a genuine repentance, and conversion of the heart, and consists not merely in a little outward change, but in a new heart, a new spirit, and a change of the whole mind. By the expression, "Make you a new heart," &c., we are shown the possibility, else God would not have prescribed it. Nothing, indeed, is possible to us alone, but everything is, through the power of God; provided that we are enabled to apply ourselves earnestly to the means of grace, and to prayer.

Thou art my God, my only hope;
My God will hear my cry,
My God will bear my spirit up,
When Satan bids me die.



Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols. I am the Lord your God, walk in my statutes. Nevertheless the children rebelled against me; they walked not in my statutes. Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live.—Ezek. xx. 18, 19. 21. 25.

It is common for men, when they are exhorted to true repentance, to plead the example of their forefathers. But because our parents and ancestors have disobeyed God, does it become us to follow their false doctrines, opinions, and manners, and not rather to be governed by the word and command of God? Alas! the children of the present times imitate their vain fathers, and are disobedient to God. And thus the parents sin in their children after their death. O how necessary is it for all parents and teachers to repent and obey God for the sake of their children and hearers; else their posterity will follow them in their disobedience. And this provokes the greatest spiritual judgment, when God suffers them to sink into false doctrine, or to fall into the hands of such teachers as their ears itch after, such as seduce them from the narrow path, from true repentance and the power of godliness. How many are at this time led into such spiritless doctrine, as cannot give them life. Lord, convert both teachers and hearers, parents and children, and preserve us from all corrupt doctrine.

Her great scum went not forth out of her; scum shall be in the fire. In thy filthiness is l ness; because I have purged thee, and thou not purged. Behold, thou art wiser than Da &c. With thy wisdom, and with thine underst ing thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast g gold and silver into thy treasures; thine hea lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast rupted thy wisdom by reason of thy bright (therefore) *I will cast thee to the ground.*—E xxiv. 12, 13. xxviii. 3, 4. 17.

THE sins and impurities of some men ar deeply rooted in their hearts, so burnt in, God is obliged to attack them with severity to melt them as with fire. Others, like tho Tyre, value themselves upon their might, pomp, pride and luxury, fancying thems wise, and ascribing everything to their riches, power, and ingenuity, which they cise only for amassing treasures by any m right or wrong. In doing this, they collect for the fire: God comes and punishes dreadfully; for the mighty are mightily ished. O that we may therefore repent ir diately, lest our iniquities should become more deeply rooted, our conversion more cult, and his future melting fire more ho God is at this time purging many cities wit and sword.

Great Shepherd of thine Israel,
Who didst between the cherubs dwell:
And led the tribes, thy chosen sheep,
Safe through the desert and the deep.

Woe be to the shepherds of Israel, that do feed themselves. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost. Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock. I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them. —Ezek. xxxiv. 2. 4. 10. 23.

A PASTOR and teacher should, not only for his own sake, but for the sake of his flock, be enlightened, converted, and himself be a sheep of Christ's flock, and taste of the right pasture, else he will neglect the sheep, and attend only to his own carnal food. Indeed how can he in every respect duly feed the souls of his sheep, if he doth not feed his own soul? how shall he know the spiritual circumstances of the sheep, as they are here described, and duly attend them, whilst he continues unconverted, and knoweth not the state of his own soul, nor duly attends to it? But God will require the flock at his hands, and cause him to cease from feeding the flock. Let us devoutly pray for faithful pastors! Lord Jesus, thou art our only shepherd, send unto us soon shepherds after thine own heart to represent thee, who seek not the fleece, but the sheep. Guide and direct us to the best pasture, and grant, that in thee we may find life and perfect enjoyment.

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and y
shall be clean; from all your filthiness and fron
all your idols will I cleanse you. A new hear
also will I give you, and a new spirit will I pu
within you; and I will take away the stony hear
out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart o
flesh. And I will put my spirit within you t
walk in my statutes and ye shall keep my judg
ments and do them.—Ezek. xxxvi. 25—27.

THIS promise, which was given to the people o Israel, applies chiefly to the New Testament dispensation, and so concerns us. We see how possible it is to be converted with our whole heart, to purify ourselves from all idols and from the love of the world; to acquire a new heart and to walk in all the commandments of God; for the Lord himself will give us and work in us all these things. Therefore will no man have an excuse on that day for retaining his former hardened heart, and continuing to adhere to his idols, money, wealth, vain honours, and the like. But to the faithful these words are highly comfortable. Yes, O my God, we rely upon these words, and now plead them before thee. Grant us thy Spirit, and soften, renew, and enliven us, that though we should lie like the dry bones of the dead, we may yet at last be full of spirit and life, full of faith and love, and walk in all thy commandments: for thou sayest, "I have spoken it, and performed it," chap. xxxviii. 14.

As rain on meadows newly mown,
So Christ shall send his influence down,
His grace on fainting souls distils,
Like heav'nly dew on thirsty hills.



Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to his companions, &c. that they would desire mercies of the God of Heaven concerning this secret. (Prayer, says Luther, is our endless comfort and refuge, and never fails us.) *Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision; then Daniel blessed the God of heaven: Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever; for wisdom and might are his.* (How attentive and faithful is God to the prayer of the faithful!) *He changeth the times and the seasons; he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding.* (He fixes the time, how long every kingdom shall stand, how long every man shall live, and how long every thing shall last. Luther.)—Dan. ii. 17—21.

ALL kingdoms, and indeed all things are subject to change: and who knows what changes may now be designed in the kingdoms of the world. But the kingdom, which, according to ver. 44, the God of Heaven will erect, shall not pass away, but continue for ever. Lord, grant that we may not trust in any thing transitory, but become faithful subjects of thine unchangeable kingdom, that in all the judgments and changes of the world, we may join fervently with Daniel in prayer, and so endure for evermore.

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun,
Does his successive journeys run,
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

To him shall endless prayer be made,
And praises throng to crown his head;
His name like sweet perfume shall rise,
With every evening sacrifice.

This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones; to the intent that the living may know, that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men. Therefore, *I Nebuchadnezzar blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation.*—Dan. iv. 17. 34.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR grew proud, and said, Is not this great Babylon that I have built, &c. Luther remarks, that the king forgot from whom he had his kingdom. He exalted himself, as if he had obtained all by his own power and understanding, but he found his mistake, before he had finished the words, a voice came down from heaven, and every thing that had been foretold came to pass. He lost his understanding and his kingdom, and did eat grass as oxen, and after seven years he returned to his senses, and then he gave the glory to God alone, acknowledged all he had to be derived from God, and said, by way of warning to all men, particularly great men, "His works are truth, and his ways judgment, and those that walk in pride he is able to abase." The ways and judgments of God are right in abasing the proud, as David confesses, Psalm cxix. 71. 75. Lord, preserve us from all haughtiness, that we may attribute all to thee, and give the glory to thee alone.

Once has God's awful voice declared,
Once and again my ears have heard,
All power is his eternal due,
He must be feared and trusted too.



O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him. Yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth. We do not present our petitions before thee for our righteousness, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear, O Lord, forgive, O Lord, hearken and do, defer not for thine own sake, O my God.—Dan. ix. 8, 9. 13. 18, 19.

O THAT all, even the great, would, at this season of spiritual and temporal judgments, humbly confess their sins, like Daniel, and pray; and that no one would except himself! This would be the best means of averting awful judgments. It is one of the greatest sins, now punished by God, that amidst all the terrible judgments which have happened, men do not pray and fly to God for refuge, as if we stood in no need of our God, and could save ourselves; or if we pray, it is not penitently, for grace, forgiveness of sins, and the salvation of our souls, but for temporal aid. In all thy troubles, O man, remember thy sins, confess them to God. First implore forgiveness; for the pardon of sin is of more importance to thee, as it was to the man sick of the palsy, than any temporal help; and when that is obtained, thou wilt find relief both in body and soul.

The God of our Salvation hears
The groans of Sion mix'd with tears,
But when he comes with kind designs,
Through all his way his terror shines.

Many of them that sleep in the dust of th
shall awake, some to everlasting life, and
shame and everlasting contempt. And th
be wise shall shine as the brightness of the
ment, and they that turn many to righteous
the stars for ever and ever. Many shall b
fied and made white and tried, but the
shall do wickedly, and none of the wicke
understand, but the wise shall understand.
xii. 2. 3. 10.

THE ungodly, says Luther, still persist in
edness, continue as they are, and care not
it; but no one ought to be offended at th
was always the case. Let us do our ow
amidst sufferings, let us purify ourselves
ourselves sincere, when tried, and prepar
for eternal life. We should go on to pra
work, and strive, and by our life and conve
endeavour to lead others to righteousnes
shall we shine as the brightness of the firm
&c. Let all teachers, fathers of families,
deed all the faithful, observe this; for un
new covenant, all are bound to act the
spiritual pastors in instructing each other,
horting, blessing, praying, like Daniel, ch
20, 21, for the holy mountain of our God.
shall their prayer soon ascend up to Go
angels shall be their ministers.

Sinners, awake betimes; ye fools be wise;
Awake before the dreadful morning rise;
Change your vain thoughts, your crooked works a
Fly to the Saviour, make the Judge your friend:
Lest like a lion his last vengeance tear
Your trembling souls, and no deliverer near.



I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face; in their affliction, they will seek me early; saying, Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us, he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days he will revive us; in the third day he will raise us up, and, we shall live in his sight.—Hosea v. 15. vi. 1, 2.

GOD frequently smites mankind, till they confess their faults. If he has not yet delivered us from the evils of war, sickness, poverty, &c., it is because many have not yet penitently confessed, that God smote them. Let us therefore in all our troubles soon return to the Lord, and he, who hath smitten us, will heal and bind us up again; and though we should be quite dead, he will, by virtue of his resurrection, revive us, and raise up to life, even as he rose to life on the third day. "Then," as we read, ver. 3. "shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord; his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth."

Death is no more the king of dread,
Since our Emanuel rose;
He took the tyrant's sting away,
And spoil'd our hellish foes.

See how the conqueror mounts aloft,
And to his Father flies,
With scars of honour in his flesh
And triumph in his eyes.

There our exalted Saviour reigns,
And scatters blessings down;
Our Jesus fills the middle seat
Of the celestial throne.

And they have not cried unto me with their
They return, but not to the Most High; th
like a deceitful bow; their princes shall j
the sword: the enemy shall pursue him.
written to him the great things of my la
they were counted as a strange thing.
them, when I depart from them.—Hosea
16. viii. 3. 12. ix. 12.

WHEN men partake of the holy sacramen
confess their sins, they form resolutic
amendment and holiness. Yet they stil
tinue the same, contenting themselves wi
external performance, while their hearts
unchanged; they do not sincerely call upo
they read a few prayers without any dev
they fancy themselves converted, but ar
for true conversion begins with the true
of faith proceeding from the heart. By th
turn with all their powers from all their
sins, and their favourite lusts. There are
who count the doctrine of a true hearty
ance, a strange doctrine, and so reject all
good; hence they are at this time pursued
enemy, or exposed to some other woe. Lo
sist us in turning to thee this very evening
all our sins, with all our heart, and in p
heartily to thee for this grace!

Why is my heart so far from thee,
My God, my chief delight!
Why are my thoughts no more by day
With thee, no more by night?

My people are bent to backsliding from me; though they called them to the Most High, none at all would exalt him. How shall I give thee up Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim; for I am God, and not man.—Hosea xi. 7—9.

WERE God at this time to proceed against men according to the rigour of his justice, he would totally destroy them, because they refuse to turn to him, and despise his warnings. But he is long-suffering and merciful, therefore he waits for our conversion; for he is God, and not man. Men would not have patience so long, they would instantly proceed to extremities. We should learn of God to be patient and merciful, even towards the most wicked, and account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation. His mercy and forbearing goodness should lead all men to repentance, to turn to the Lord, and (ver. 10.) to walk after him; for if they persevere in their impenitence and contempt of his word, still more terrible judgments will be denounced against them, and the fierceness of God's anger will be heightened.

When shall the sovereign grace
Of my forgiving God,
Restore me from these dangerous ways
My wandering feet have trod?

Therefore turn thou to thy God: And Ephrai
Yet I am become rich, I have found me o
stance: in all my labours they shall find
quity in me, that were sin. O Israel, tho
destroyed thyself, but in me is thine help.
iniquity of Ephraim is bound up, &c.—Ho
6. 8. xiii. 9. 12.

God still continues calling men to true r
ance; but most men, like Ephraim, are b
rich, have found them out substance, and
of no sin, from which they should turn a
pent. What do you mean by conversion
they; from what should we be converte
are neither Heathens nor Turks. Thus th
full of their own righteousness, and blind t
sins; but their iniquity is bound up, and
sin is hid. Therefore God inflicts at pres
many judgments and punishments, that me
not count themselves innocent, but peni
confess their sins, and apply to him only,
man, for help and salvation. Lord Jesus, c
me from all self-righteousness, even the m
fined, and grant me grace, that clothed wit
righteousness I may enjoy peace.

Why doth the man of riches grow
To insolence and pride,
To see his wealth and honour flow
With every rising tide?

Not all his treasures can procure
His soul a short reprieve,
Redeem from death one guilty hour,
Or make his brother live.



O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the Lord, say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips. Ashur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, ye are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy. I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him.—Hosea xiv. 1—4.

WE may judge how necessary true repentance is, from finding it repeatedly enjoined here, and in different parts of the holy Scriptures, more than a hundred times. It is also possible as well as necessary. In order to effect this, God brings troubles upon man. Hence so many countries are at this time fallen by their iniquity, that they may be moved humbly to confess it. God himself prescribes a penitential form of prayer, and bids us say, "Take away all iniquity," &c. We should not apply to men for aid; they are only broken reeds, and aggravate the public distress. Nor should we rely upon the work of our own hands, upon a disciplined army, and make them our gods: but say, "In God the fatherless findeth mercy;" then he will heal our backslidings, assist us in temporal matters, love us freely, and shew unto us his loving-kindness and eternal salvation.

While I keep silence and conceal,
My heavy guilt within my heart,
What torments doth my conscience feel,
What agonies of inward smart!

o the Lord your God, for he is gracious erciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, epenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth, if ll return and repent.—Joel ii. 13, 14.

we have another exhortation to true re- nce, which is particularly necessary, when hreatens his judgments, war and other ca- ies; for a very terrible day is here denounced r. 11. The prophet takes occasion from it dmonish them to repentance, which might rt the threatened evil, as it did at Nineveh. e same admonition shews us the nature of e repentance. We are to turn with all our arts, and not appear outwardly penitent, as e Jews did, who rent their garments; we should end our hearts, and intreat God to enable us by rue contrition to smite, soften, and change them. As a public day of repentance and prayer is here enjoined, on which all, especially the priests, were to turn and weep and pray; it is much to be wished, that such appointments were now made, since even the heathens invoked their gods in ex- traordinary distress. If in the mean time we call on the name of the Lord (see v. 32.) we shall be delivered in body and soul from all his judg- ments.

Praise waits in Sion, Lord, for thee,
There shall our vows be paid:
Thou hast an ear when sinners pray,
All flesh shall seek thine aid.



Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live. Establish judgment in the gate; it may be that the Lord God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph. I hate, I despise your feast days and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs, for I will not hear the melody of thy viols.—Amos v. 14, 15. 21. 23.

Amos was obliged to rebuke the people sharply, and particularly remonstrate with them, that their mere external worship, their feast days, their prayers and songs, were, without repentance, an abomination to God. On this account they opposed him, and even Amaziah the high priest (ch. vii. 10.) accused him to the king, saying, "Amos hath conspired against thee, the land is not able to bear all his words." Yet he persisted in promising them life and the favour of God, if they would only seek good with all their hearts, and not content themselves with mere outward worship. The same is the case now. The faithful servants of God are still accused of various crimes by carnal teachers, and the land is not able to bear all their words, nor to tolerate the truth; they desire only to hear of comfort, peace, and better times, not to amend themselves. Hence some countries are now reduced to hear and to endure the preaching of cannon, and other plagues. Lord, grant that we may not deceive ourselves with mere external worship, but turn to thee with all our hearts, and serve thee without hypocrisy.

Thus saith the Lord, the spacious fields
And flocks and herds are mine,
O'er all the cattle of the hills
I claim a right divine.

Behold the days come, saith the Lord will send a famine in the land: not bread, nor a thirst for water, but of words of the Lord. Behold the eyes God are upon the sinful kingdom, an troy it from off the face of the earth: not the least grain shall fall upon Amos viii. 11. ix. 8, 9.

WHEN men do not attend to the wo but grow weary of it, God will take from them, as he hath from many countries. Or he suffers teachers to administer little food to the soul; wh a famine of the word of God. They fro, as we read, chap. viii. 12. and sh it. Upon which Luther observes, t rejects the word of God, shall have it from him, that he shall never find it, should earnestly desire it. Wherever of the word prevails, that state or sinking into ruin; yet there will be e them some faithful servants of God, being his grain, he will not suffer to ground and be lost, but turn to thei persecution they suffer from Satan, a other calamities, till they are finally p purified.

When God in anger casteth off,
And makes his wrath to smoke,
Against the people of his love,
His little chosen flock.

And still to heighten the distress,
God's presence is withdrawn,
His wonted signs of power and grac
His power and grace are gone.



The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rocks, &c. Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord. All the men of thy confederacy have brought thee even to the border; the men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee, and prevailed against thee.—Obad. 3, 4. 7.

In like manner God still brings down the proud. Whoever relies upon his own wisdom or power, or upon his high forts, shall be humbled, and put to confusion. No one is exalted so high, or fortified so strongly, that God cannot bring him down. Let those remember this who inhabit fortified towns. They know not what may befal them. He who trusts in many confederates shall likewise be put to confusion. How many countries have been deceived, overpowered, betrayed, and brought in greater distress by their allies, who did eat of their bread, and whom they sought as their deliverer. We should therefore rely upon nothing but God alone, then shall we be safe both in spiritual and temporal distresses; so shall we exalt ourselves, as the eagle, up to the Sun of Righteousness, and set our nest, our habitation, in heaven, in the heart of God.

O happy nation, where the Lord
Reveals the treasures of his word,
And builds his church, his earthly throne!
His eye the heathen world surveys,
He form'd their hearts, he knows their ways,
But God their Maker is unknown.

I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. All thy billows and thy waves passed over me. When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord, and my prayer came in unto thee, into thy holy temple.—Jonah ii. 2, 3. 7.

WHEN we cry unto the Lord, he will likewise answer us, as he did Jonah, and hear and save us, however deeply we may be sunk into ruin, should even all the billows and waves of affliction pass over us. No danger, spiritual or temporal, is too great for him, he can and will save, even in the extremity of distress, as a stone, when thrown to the greatest possible height, begins to fall. A simple but pious man said, "When thou thinkest, it is all over with thee, then thy Saviour comes to thy assistance." This have all the faithful often experienced. Lord, strengthen our faith, and grant, that when our hope is feeble, we may not quite despair, but pray fervently, and receive deliverance from thee.

Death and the terrors of the grave,
Stood round me with their dismal shade;
While floods of high temptations rose,
And made my sinking soul afraid.

Temptations fled at God's rebuke,
The blast of his Almighty breath:
He sent salvation from on high,
And drew me from the depths of death.



And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them, and he did it not.—Jonah iii. 10.

THE prophet Jonah was ordered to preach to the city of Nineveh, that in forty days it would be overthrown. The people believed it, and repentance was preached. And the king caused it to be proclaimed, that they should fast, and cry mightily to God, and that "every one (ver. 8.) should turn from his evil way, and from the violence that is in his hands:" and it came to pass, that God did not destroy them. God still threatens us in his word; he hath warned us by earthquakes; he hath carried off many thousands by his late judgments, and caused many countries and cities to become desolate, and seems to threaten still greater judgments. O that Christians would, after the example of Heathens, believe the threats and warnings of God, and solemnize public acts of repentance! O that high and low would turn to the Lord; this would be the best means of procuring peace, for without repentance all projects of peace will be fruitless. O my God, if the careless part of mankind will not turn to thee, grant that we may turn to thee more heartily, work out our salvation with fear and trembling, and offer up fervent prayers for other men.

When God, provok'd with daring crimes,
Scourges the madness of the times,
He turns the field to barren sand,
And dries the river from the land.

He (our Saviour) *shall stand and feed in the s*
of the Lord, in the majesty of the nam
Lord his God, and they shall abide: for no
he be great unto the ends of the earth.
hand shall be lift up upon thine adversari
all thine enemies shall be cut off. In the d
thy walls are to be built, in that day shall
cree be far removed.—Micah v. 4. 9. vii. 11

THIS promise, though already fulfilled, ext
the whole time of the New Testament,
that we read, chap. iv. 1, 2. 7, shall still
complished in the last days: the mountai
Lord, the kingdom of God, shall be highe
all the mountains, when the prophecy in I
44, 45, shall be accomplished. The word
shall spread more and more, his kingdom
gloriously propagated, and the enemies
church shall be scattered and put to flight
is the prayer of all the servants and child
God. And the Lord will even at this tim
us victory over all our spiritual enemies, s
world, and the devil; he will keep our w
his sight, and build us up on himself.
should therefore not despair, either in o
vate troubles, or under the corruptions
church, but go on with prayer and labo
so contribute towards a future reformatio
sist us we beseech thee, O Lord.

Great God, whose universal sway,
The known and unknown worlds obey,
Now give the kingdom to thy Son,
Extend his power, exalt his throne.



He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? the good man is perished out of the earth, &c. The best of them is as a brier: the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge: the day of thy watchmen, and thy visitation cometh; now shall be their perplexity.—Micah vi. 8. vii. 2. 4.

It hath been shown also to us what is good, namely, to keep the word of God; so that we are without excuse. Yet men will not hear of keeping the word and commandments of God, as if the thing were impossible or needless. The righteous among the Jews were gone; they are daily decreasing among us, and are mocked by the wise and proud men of the world. Such haughty mockers are like a brier, who can only prick with their writings and discourses, and will not hearken to zealous preachers. But how soon may the day of their visitation come, when God shall cause repentance to be preached to them, by formidable enemies or other judgments. Then will the careless be in great perplexity. Lord, help us to keep and practise thy word, to humble ourselves before thee, that, when thy terrible watchmen shall come, we may find refuge in thee.

Who shall ascend thy heav'nly place,
Great God, and dwell before thy face?
The man that minds religion now,
And humbly walks with God below.

The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the Lord hath his way in the whirlwind, and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. The Lord is good, a strong-hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him. But with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies.—Nahum i. 3. 7. 8.

No fort is too strong. If we rely on our fortification or other strength, we may be humbled by some fresh distress, and at last fall into the extremities of danger. In all our distress, spiritual and temporal, we should penitently take refuge in Jesus, and humbly confess our sins before him, for in his sight no man is innocent. Then will he be long-suffering and gracious to us, and overcome all our enemies, particularly the spiritual enemies of our souls. For he is great in power to save us. He will certainly deliver us, when our danger and perplexity are at the utmost. He can make a path in the sea and the storm. He will be our strong-hold in the day of trouble; for he knoweth all them that put their trust in him. Assist us, therefore, O Lord, that instead of counting ourselves innocent, we may rely upon thy holiness, and grace, as manifested in Jesus Christ, may be free from guilt, and receive comfort in death.

Exalt the Lord our God,
And worship at his feet;
His nature is all holiness,
And mercy is his seat.

We shall not die: O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment, and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction. Behold, his soul which is lifted up, is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.—Habak. i. 12. ii. 4.

It is our concern to pray, when enemies invade, or other judgments befal us, that we may not die, but that God would turn it to a wholesome paternal chastisement, and that (chap. iii. 2.) in wrath he would remember mercy. We must not be obstinate, disobedient, self-willed, faithless, and impatient, but learn to wait for the promised salvation, else we shall have neither rest nor comfort in our troubles. For the just shall live by his faith. By faith we are justified, and obtain life; we should therefore pray more and more earnestly for faith and a living knowledge of Christ. For according to chap. ii. 14, "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." This remains to be accomplished. He who is just in faith, will not commit injustice in his life; whence we read, chap. ii. 6, "Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his."

If burning beams of noon conspire
To dart a pestilential fire;
God is our life, his wings are spread
To guard us with a healthful shade.

But if the fire, or plague, or sword,
Receive commission from the Lord
To strike his saints among the rest,
Their very pains and deaths are blest.

It shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees, who, as Luther says, sit as undisturbed as wine, which is to be drawn off, and mock the threatenings of the prophets. Therefore *seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment, seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be, ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.*—Zeph. i. 12. ii. 3.

THE terrible day of judgment, namely, the destruction of Jerusalem, was very near, but men believed not the prophets, and were quite secure. Our present security and mockery is also a mark of the latter evil days, and of the terrible judgments. It is a comfort, however, that God here exhorts the humble, who keep his commandments, to seek righteousness and meekness, that is, to become continually more righteous and meek; so shall they be hid on the terrible day. God still searches them as it were with candles. He knows who is careless, and who feareth his word. The former shall perish in the judgments, or fall into great anxiety and terror; the latter shall be preserved and comforted. For they are not "haughty (chap. iii. 11.) because of his holy mountain," but humble themselves; and the Lord (ver. 15.) "hath taken away their judgments," and prevented their spiritual and temporal enemies from doing them any harm.

When the great Judge supreme and just,
Shall once inquire for blood,
The humble souls that mourn in dust,
Shall find a faithful God.

And the people did fear the Lord. Then spake Haggai, &c. I am with you, saith the Lord. Be strong all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work: for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts. Fear ye not. And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come. From this day will I bless you.—Hagg. i. 12, 13. ii. 4, 5. 7. 19.

WHEN the Israelites returned from Babylon, every one returned to his own house, and the house of the Lord lay desolate. Therefore God withdrew from them every temporal blessing, and he that "earned wages (ver. 6.) did put it into a bag with holes." Then said the prophet, "Consider your ways." Upon this the people feared the Lord, and he gave them assurance twice, "I am with you." Then they built the house of the Lord, and from that day God again gave them temporal blessings. If we seek first the kingdom of God, every temporal good shall happen to us, else we may chance to put our money into a bag with holes. Let us therefore labour confidently in the spiritual house of our own souls and the souls of other men, fearing nothing; for as Christ, the consolation of the Gentiles, came to the second temple, and made it more glorious than the former; how much more will he come to the house and temple of our hearts, and be our sovereign comfort.

If God to build the house deny,
The builders work in vain:
And towns, without his wakeful eye,
An useless watch maintain.

For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her. He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for lo, I come, and will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord.—Zech. ii. 5. 8. 10. See ver. 13.

THE church of the New Testament is interested in this promise, which was given to the temporal Israel and Jerusalem. "The Lord is in the midst of her," Psalm xlvi. So likewise will the Lord be a wall of fire round about us, who fear him; he will encamp about us, like the angel of the Lord, with his fiery chariots and horses, and manifest himself gloriously in the midst of us, even in our hearts. He will put an end to the power of our enemies, the enemies of his church, and no more suffer us to be touched, than the apple of his eye. We should therefore rejoice, and firmly believe, that he will dwell with us. Whence he always repeats, "Thus saith the Lord." He is raised up (ver. 13.) out of his holy habitation, and will at length gloriously rebuild his city and his church. Lord, come quickly with thy salvation.

How honourable is the place,
Where we adoring stand;
Zion the glory of the earth,
And beauty of the land!

Trust in the Lord, for ever trust,
And banish all your fears;
Strength in the Lord Jehovah dwells,
Eternal as his years.



If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by. (Angels, says Luther, protect and guide pious people, more especially ministers.) *Behold, I will bring forth my servant the* BRANCH. *For behold, the stone that I have laid before Joshua: upon one stone shall be seven eyes; and the* BRANCH *shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord.*—Zech. iii. 7—9. vi. 12.

THE servant *Zemah*, or the Branch, is Christ, and he is the stone, which God hath hewn out by death, by which Christ merited for us the seven eyes, that is, the manifold gifts of the Holy Spirit. Then shall we grow like grass, be built up the spiritual house of God, and assist in building it. The foundation of this growth and building is this, that God hath in one day taken away the sins of the world through Christ, and the more we continue in him, the more shall we experience growth, edification, and the protection of the holy angels, which is an especial comfort to faithful teachers.

The Lord reveals his face,
And smiling from above,
Sends down the gospel of his grace,
Th' epistles of his love.

These sacred words impart
Our Maker's just commands;
The pity of his melting heart,
And vengeance of his hands.

Hence we awake our fear,
And draw our comfort hence;
The arms of grace are treasur'd here,
An armour of defence.

Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain. For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, &c.—Zech. iv. 6, 7. 10.

ZERUBBABEL was to build the temple, and the enemy's power was as great as a mountain before him. God promises to support him, not by an army, but by his spirit, and the great mountain was to become a plain. It was not to be reduced to a little hill, which, though some obstacle, might be surmounted, but it was to be a plain, a smooth way, which might be passed with ease. So that the seeming hindrance would rather forward, as the great mountain of the adverse Persian monarchy, in the time of Cyrus and other kings, promoted the building of the temple. Now Zerubbabel was a type of Christ, to whom, when he built his spiritual temple, all the great mountains, his enemies, death and hell, were forced to give way. In like manner the greatest mountains shall still become a plain before us, and the greatest hindrances of the kingdom of God shall, in and through us, promote it. If the building prospers in such times as these, we should not despise these days of small things. The seven lamps, mentioned ver. 2. and the seven eyes of God, belong to us also.

This northern isle, our native land,
Lies safe in the Almighty's hand.
Our foes of vict'ry dream in vain,
And wear the captivating chain.



I will encamp about mine house. For how great is his goodness, and how great his beauty! Corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids. I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord.—Zech. ix. 8. 17. x. 12.

WHOEVER is content with dry morality, and external works of the law, is still a barren desert. But he who feels the gospel as the power of God, and draws all his strength from his name, the blood and wounds of Jesus will bring forth fruit in himself and in others; he will beget spiritual children, which is the duty of the faithful, who should all assist by their life and conversation in building the kingdom and house of God. Lord, assist us in doing this, for we belong to thine house. Be thou a camp round about us, and strengthen us with thine heart-cheering gospel, that we may walk joyfully in thy name, and propagate thy truth.

Shout to the Lord, and let our joys
 Thro' the whole nation run;
Ye British skies, resound the noise
 Beyond the rising sun.

Thy power the whole creation rules,
 And on the starry skies
Sits smiling at the weak designs
 Thine envious foes devise.

In vain the busy sons of hell
 Still new rebellions try,
Their souls shall pine with envious rage,
 And vex away and die.

In that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David, &c. I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication. In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin, and for uncleanness. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one.—Zech. xii. 8. 10. xiii. 1. xiv. 9.

THESE glorious promises concern the New Testament, and having been fulfilled ever since the time of Christ and his apostles, affect us also, who appertain to the new spiritual Jerusalem and Zion. How much more will they be gloriously accomplished in the last times, when "at evening time it shall be light," and "living waters shall go out!" We read such another promise in Isa. xxx. 25, 26. So that at that time there shall be one Lord, one flock, and one Shepherd, and no more separation. Lord, strengthen our faith, and awaken us more to prayer and unwearied labour, that we may co-operate towards future reformation.

Lord, in the morning thou shalt hear,
My voice ascending high;
To thee will I direct my prayer,
To thee lift up mine eye.

Thou art a God, before whose sight
The wicked shall not stand;
Sinners shall ne'er be thy delight,
Nor dwell at thy right hand.



The priest's lips should keep knowledge, &c. He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver.—Mal. ii. 7. iii. 3. *Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd. For lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land, which shall not visit those that be cut off, neither shall seek the young one, nor heal that that is broken, nor feed that that standeth still, &c. Woe to the idol shepherd, that leaveth the flock.*—Zech. xi. 15—17.

THE greatest of God's judgments is, when he punishes the ingratitude and disobedience to his word, by sending foolish idol shepherds, who make gold or their belly their God, who feed themselves, instead of feeding the sheep, and so seek the fleece instead of the flock. O that God would at this time purge and purify the children of Levi, the priests and Levites, and those who wish to become such. Such lips alone as are purified and anointed by the Holy Ghost, are qualified to keep the doctrine; as St. Paul says, keep that which is committed to thee by the Holy Ghost. He who is not so qualified, is only a wrangler, and notwithstanding his zeal, may seduce from the pure doctrine and from the narrow path. Lord, thou art as the fire of the goldsmith, and as the soap of the fuller. O melt and refine me from the dross of sin, and purify all present and future teachers, and grant that the present judgments may answer this purpose.

The Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book o
membrance was written before him for them
feared the Lord, and that thought upon his na
And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of ho
in that day when I make up my jewels, and I w
spare them, as a man spareth his own son th
serveth him. Then shall ye return and discer
between the righteous and the wicked; betwee
him that serveth God, and him that serveth hi
not.—Mal. iii. 16—18.

In ver. 13. God saith, their words were stout against him, in saying it is vain to serve God, and there is no profit in keeping his ordinances. The faithful ought to take this comfort, that all their sighs are recorded in the book of remembrance, and that God will distinguish betwixt them and the wicked. For he will kindle a fire against these, and leave them neither root nor branch. But he will spare the good, and the Sun of righteousness shall arise upon thee. From the beginning to the end of the Bible, God makes this distinction, and will manifest it in his present judgments, as well as on the last day. Let the careless take this as a warning, and sin no more. There is no difference, we are all poor sinners. We are so by nature, but the faithful shall attain grace, righteousness, and holiness. And they have this consolation, that God will remember all their troubles, and spare and protect them during all his judgments.

O God, my refuge, hear my cries,
Behold my flowing tears;
For earth and hell my hurt devise,
And triumph in my fears.



Thou hast wrought not only those things, but also the things which fell out before, and which ensued after. Yea, what things thou didst determine were ready at hand. Thy power standeth not in multitude, nor thy might in strong men; for thou art a God of the afflicted, a Saviour of them that are without hope. I pray thee, king of every creature, hear thou my prayer. And make every nation and tribe to acknowledge, that thou art the God of all power and might, and that there is none other that protecteth the people of Israel but thou.—Judith ix. 6. 11, 12. 14.

ALL nature is at thy command. Thy word must be obeyed, and the thoughts which thou inspirest must be executed. Lord, grant that we may ever pray with the same humility and faith, and never swell our minds with presumptuous confidence, for arrogant presumption is at all times offensive to thee. O that all potentates with their armies would trust in thy mercy and power alone, and give the glory only to thee, then thou wouldst soon grant them victory.

Blest is the nation where the Lord,
Hath fix'd his gracious throne,
Where he reveals his heav'nly word,
And calls their tribes his own.

Kings are not rescued by the force
Of armies from the grave;
Nor speed nor courage of an horse
Can the bold rider save.

God is their fear, and God their trust,
When plague or famine spread;
His watchful eye secures the just,
Amidst ten thousand dead.

Froward thoughts separate from God: and his power when it is tried, reproveth the unwise. For wisdom is a loving spirit, and will not acquit a blasphemer of his words; for God is witness of his reins, and a true beholder of his heart, and a hearer of his tongue. For the ear of jealousy heareth all things, &c. Therefore beware of murmuring.—Wisdom i. 3. 6. 10, 11.

When God punishes proud conceited men, they learn that their conceit was mere folly, since it turns to their own hurt. But the greatest folly of all is that of maliciously persecuting and ridiculing the children and servants of God. Such persecutors are both void of wisdom and the Holy Ghost; and how should they either teach others as they ought, or keep the doctrine themselves? they will consequently do much mischief and increase the number of scoffers. But they shall not go unpunished. For however they may dissemble before men, or pretend zeal for the pure doctrine, God knows their wicked hearts and designs. Whoever therefore would escape misery, let him take heed not to mock and insult the servants and children of God, nor call doctrines which proceed from God the inventions of Satan.

Help, Lord, for men of virtue fail,
 Religion loses ground:
The sons of violence prevail,
 And treacheries abound.

Their oaths and promises they break,
 Yet act the flatterer's part;
With fair deceitful lips they speak,
 And with a double heart.



Let our strength be the law of justice; for that which is feeble is found to be nothing worth. Therefore let us lie in wait for the righteous; because he is not for our turn, and he is clean contrary to our doings; he upbraideth us with our offending the law, and objecteth to our infamy the transgressions of our education. He is grievous unto us even to behold: for his life is not like other men's, his ways are of another fashion. We are esteemed of him as counterfeits; he abstaineth from our ways as from filthiness; he pronounceth the end of the just to be blessed, and maketh his boast, that God is his father.—Wisdom ii. 11, 12. 15, 16.

THE case is still the same. The children of this world will do what they list, and despise him who doth not conform to them, which we may particularly observe among young men at universities, in the army and navy. They lie in wait for the righteous and good, and can hardly bear the sight of them, because the lives of the righteous differ from theirs, which is a silent rebuke, and smites their consciences. Lord, grant that we may rebuke the wicked by our lives and conversations, but chiefly by the former, and that we may abstain from their ways as from filthiness. Defend us from all their devices, and let us experience that the end of the just is blessed, and that we are sure of a safe refuge in thee, our Father, either in time of trouble, or in the hour of death.

Lord, crush the serpent in the dust,
And all his plots destroy:
While those that in thy mercy trust
For ever shout for joy.

Then shall the righteous man stand in grea
ness, before the face of such as have afflict
and made no account of his labours. Wh
see it, they shall be troubled with terribl
and shall be amazed at the strangeness of
vation, so far beyond all that they lool
And they repenting, and groaning for ang
spirit, shall say within themselves, Thi
whom we had sometimes in derision, and a
of reproach. We fools accounted his life m
and his end to be without honour. Ho
numbered among the children of God, and
is among the saints! Therefore have w
from the way of truth, &c. We have
ourselves in the way of wickedness, &c.
hath pride profited us? or what good ha
with our vaunting brought us? All thos
are passed away like a shadow.—Wisd
1—9.

HERE the poor worldlings call good me
who know not how to live in the world,
acquire riches and honour. But the ti
soon come when they shall call themsel
For is it not folly to confine our prudence
short transitory existence, to hunt after
honours, and pleasures, and not remembe
ture state? What can these things profi
death? and how much less will they pr
after death? If the world laugh at us
have patience; they mock not us, but God,
cause ours is. We shall stand before the
in great boldness. A young man, who w
culed for his piety, was so strengthened b
words, that he disregarded the scorn an
of the world.



After this cometh night, but vice shall not prevail against wisdom. Give me wisdom that sitteth by the throne, and reject me not from among the children. O send her out of thy holy heavens, and from the throne of thy glory, that being present she may labour with me, that I may know what is pleasing unto thee. Thy counsel who hath known, except thou give wisdom, and send thy Holy Spirit, from above? For so the ways of them which lived on the earth were reformed, and men were taught the things that are pleasing unto thee.—Wisdom vii. 30. ix. 4. 10. 17, 18.

How necessary is this prayer for true wisdom! For he who doth not pray in this manner, is an unwise man, though he may be possessed of much learning and worldly wisdom, nay, even with great knowledge of divinity; if he be void of this wisdom from above, and of the Holy Spirit, none of his ways are right, and he knoweth not what is pleasing unto God. But no cunning or malice shall overpower him who hath this wisdom; he will labour and be blessed in doing what is well pleasing to the Lord. Lord, let thy wisdom so influence my heart and conduct, that I may be blessed abundantly in all things.

Lord, I have made thy word my choice,
My lasting heritage:
There shall my noblest powers rejoice,
My warmest thoughts engage.

I'll read the hist'ries of thy love,
And keep thy laws in sight;
While through the promises I rove
With ever fresh delight.



Thou hast ordered all things in measure and num and weight. Thou hast mercy upon all: for t canst do all things, and winkest at the sins men, because they should amend. For thou lo all the things that are, and abhorrest noth which thou hast made: for never wouldst th have made any thing, if thou hadst hated it. H thou sparest all; for they are thine, O Lo thou lover of souls. Therefore chastenest t them by little and little, that offend.—Wisdom 20. 23, 24. 26. xii. 2.

O THAT the great potentates of the world w lovers of the lives of men, and would sp them, then the Lord might spare and pity th also. O my God, have mercy upon us, a pardon our sins. Grant that we may ame and inspire us with the firm conviction, t thou hast created nothing for thy hatred a wrath, but that men bring thine anger up themselves. Preserve us according to thy go pleasure, and grant that we may experience t thou measurest and weighest all our necessit and all our help, that we may find thee a m ciful lover of souls in thy kind paternal tre ment of us.

High in the heavens, eternal God,
Thy goodness in full glory shines;
That truth shall break through every cloud,
That veils and darkens thy designs.

For ever firm thy justice stands,
As mountains their foundations keep:
Wise are the wonders of thy hands,
Thy judgments are a mighty deep.



For so much then as thou art righteous thyself, thou orderest all things righteously: thinking it not agreeable with thy power to condemn him, that hath not deserved to be punished. But thou, mastering thy power, judgest with equity, and orderest us with as great favour. For if thou didst punish the enemies of thy children, &c. with such deliberation, giving them time and place, whereby they might be delivered from their malice, with how great circumspection didst thou judge thine own sons, &c. that we should carefully think of thy goodness, and when we ourselves are judged, we should look for mercy.—Wisdom xii. 15. 18. 20—22.

GOD being judge of all the world, will do injustice to no man. Though his judgments may here be incomprehensible to us, hereafter we shall see things clearly. Order us, O Lord, with tenderness, govern us with great mercy, and let the judgments and plagues which befal wicked men, serve for our chastisement, warning, and humiliation; but grant that we may trust in thy mercy, not mistake thee, depend more firmly on thy grace and pity, and not sink into unbelief and despair.

When men grow bold in wicked ways,
And yet a God they own;
My heart within me often says,
Their thoughts believe there's none.

Thy justice shall maintain its throne,
Though mountains melt away;
Thy judgments are a world unknown,
A deep unfathom'd sea.

From thee, when creature streams run low,
And mortal comforts die,
Perpetual springs of life shall flow,
And raise our pleasures high.

But thou, O God, art gracious and true: long-suffering, and in mercy ordering all things. For if we sin, we are thine, knowing thy power; but we will not sin, knowing that we are counted thine. For to know thee, is perfect righteousness; yea, to know thy power is the root of immortality.—Wisdom xv. 1—3.

In like manner Christ saith, John xvii. 3, "This is life eternal," &c. Grant us, O God, a living knowledge of thee and thy dear Son, that through this knowledge we may arrive at perfect righteousness, and have in us the root of eternal life. Alas: we know thee too little; enlighten us with thy Holy Spirit, that we may see thy kindness, thy truth and patience, and believe that thou wilt order us, as thou dost all things, with mercy, so that if we should sin through infirmity, we may yet remain thy children. Let us not abuse this unto licentiousness, but let us the more cautiously avoid sin, that as thy children, we may have a filial fear, love, and confidence in thee.

The heavens declare thy glory, Lord,
In every star thy wisdom shines:
But when our eyes behold thy word,
We read thy name in fairer lines.

The rolling sun, the changing light,
And days and nights thy power confess;
But the blest volume thou hast writ
Reveals thy justice and thy grace.

Thy noblest wonders here we view,
In souls renew'd and sins forgiv'n:
Lord, cleanse my sins, my soul renew,
And make thy word my guide to heav'n.



Blessed be God, that liveth for ever, and blessed be his kingdom. For he doth scourge and hath mercy: and he will scourge us for our iniquities, and will have mercy again. Blessed are they which have been sorrowful for all thy scourge; for they shall rejoice for thee, when they have seen all thy glory, and shall be glad for ever. Let my soul bless God, the great king.—Tobit xiii. 1, 2. 5. 14, 15.

When God seemeth to be angry, in chastising us, it is not wrath, but mercy and goodness; and though during his chastisement our sins are a heavy pressing weight, yet they are all forgiven, and we are blessed, if we call upon the name of the Lord. Lord, grant that we, who fear thee, may believe and experience in our hearts, that thou wilt comfort us in all our tribulation, and finally deliver us.

The Lord, how wond'rous are his ways,
How firm his truth, how large his grace,
He takes his mercy for his throne,
And thence he makes his glory known.

Not half so high his power has spread
The starry heavens above our head,
As his rich love exceeds our praise,
Exceeds the highest hopes we raise.

Not half so high hath nature plac'd
The rising morning from the west;
As his forgiving grace removes
The daily guilt of those he loves.

How slowly doth his wrath arise!
On swifter wings salvation flies;
And if he lets his anger burn,
How soon his frowns to pity turn.

My son, be mindful of the Lord thy God days, and let not thy will be set to sin, or gress his commandments. Give alms of stance, &c. Do that to no man which tho Bless the Lord thy God alway, and desi that thy ways may be directed; and tha paths and counsels may prosper. And my son, that we are made poor: for th much wealth, if thou fear God, and dep all sin, and do that which is pleasing in —Tobit iv. 5. 7. 15. 19. 21.

THESE are excellent paternal lessons. O fathers would by their life and conversati exhort their children, and that childre hearken to them. Let parents and chil amine themselves this evening, read the chapter of Tobit, and join in prayer. grant that all of us, old and young, mindful of thee all our days, have thee hearts and before our eyes continually, give ourselves up to any sin. Grant may have pity upon the poor, preserve pride, from doing to others that which and incline us to do all things with pray to avoid every unbelieving anxiety.

Come, children, learn to fear the Lord,
And that your days be long,
Let not a false or spiteful word
Be found upon your tongue.

Depart from mischief, practise love,
Pursue your works of peace;
So shall the Lord your ways approve,
And set your souls at ease.



He will scourge us for our iniquities, and will have mercy again. Therefore see what he will do with you, and confess him with your whole mouth. In the land of my captivity do I praise him, and declare his might and majesty to a sinful nation. O ye sinners, turn and do justice before him: who can tell if he will accept you, and have mercy on you?—Tobit xiii. 5, 6.

When God chastises sinners by sickness, poverty, war, or other distress, it is all in mercy, and intended to lead them to the knowledge of their sins, and to true repentance, to humble them truly, and turn them from an earthly mind, from covetousness and other sins. Hence many are at this time spoiled of their goods, or carried away prisoners of war or hostages into foreign countries. They and their friends should, under these calamities, consider what may be the design of God, and wherein they have sinned. For men without trouble grow careless and blind to their sins. To such are addressed the words, "O ye sinners, turn;" for all affliction should lead us to true repentance, and to the more serious practice of true Christianity. If we set about this, we shall praise and bless God even in affliction, as the Swedish prisoners once did in Siberia, because God had converted many of them during their trouble.

Amidst thy wrath remember love,
Restore thy servant, Lord,
Nor let a Father's chast'ning prove,
Like an avenger's sword.

All my desire to thee is known,
Thine eye counts every tear,
And ev'ry sigh and ev'ry groan
Is notic'd by thine ear.

My son, if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for temptation. Set thine heart aright, and constantly endure, &c. Cleave unto him, and depart not away, that thou mayest be increased at thy last end. Ye that fear the Lord believe him, and your reward shall not fail; hope for good, and for everlasting joy and mercy. Look at the generations of old, and see, did ever any trust in the Lord, and was confounded: or did any abide in his fear, and was forsaken? or whom did he ever despise that called upon him? For the Lord is full of compassion and mercy, long-suffering, and very pitiful, and forgiveth sins and saveth in time of affliction.—Ecclus. ii. 1—3. 8—11.

ALL true Christians should bear these comfortable words continually in mind, for a suspicious heart is always fearing the worst, but we should ever hope and expect the best from our good God; temptations and sufferings should not weaken, but exercise and strengthen us. We should consider the examples of the faithful of old. There is not an instance from the beginning of the world of any one forsaken or despised who called upon God. How unlikely is it that he should begin with us!

What sore temptations break my rest,
What wars and struggles in my breast!
But through thy grace that reigns within,
I guard against my darling sin.

That sin that close besets me still,
That works and strives against my will;
When shall thy Spirit's sovereign power
Destroy it that it rise no more?



The greater thou art, the more humble thyself, and thou shalt find favour before the Lord. For the power of the Lord is great, and he is honoured of the lowly. Seek not out the things that are too hard for thee, neither search the things that are above thy strength. For many are deceived by their own vain opinion, and an evil suspicion has overthrown their judgment. A stubborn heart shall fare evil at the last; and he that loveth danger shall perish therein. In the punishment of the proud there is no remedy; for the plant of wickedness hath taken root in him.—Ecclus iii. 18. 20, 21. 24. 26. 28.

PRIDE and arrogance will overthrow a man be he ever so great and powerful; they will produce much trouble and sometimes even bloodshed. But in divines this haughty arrogance is the most mischievous; for in other cases it is injurious only to the body and worldly goods, but here the soul is damaged. Hence so many dangerous errors, controversies, and schisms, and the vineyard of the Lord is often rooted up by wild boars. Our comfort is, that when these proud spirits attack the children and servants of God, they run headlong, and will infallibly plunge themselves into ruin. They cannot succeed, for God doth great things only by means of the humble.

Why do the proud insult the poor,
And boast the great estates they have?
How vain are riches to secure
Their haughty owners from the grave.

My Saviour shall my life restore,
And raise me from my dark abode;
My flesh and soul shall part no more,
But dwell for ever near my God.

They that serve her, shall minister to the holy one; and them that love her, the Lord doth love. Whoso giveth ear unto her, shall judge the nations, &c. At the first she will walk with him by crookcd ways, and bring fear and dread upon him, and torment him with her discipline, until she may trust his soul, and try him by her laws. Then will she return the straight way unto him, and comfort him. Be not ashamed to confess thy sins.—Ecclus iv. 14, 15. 17, 18. 26.

He who desires Christ, the heavenly wisdom, to love and comfort him, must first love and obey his word, turn from all his sins, not reserving one; then shall he receive a pure spirit. As men do not at once confess and renounce their sins, but, like David, reserve and retain some, wisdom will strike terror into them by her corrections, as she did into David's bones. And she repeats her scourges, till they become sincerely penitent, like David, and confess their sins; in which case God will forgive them all, and even rejoice and quicken them.

Raise thee, my soul, fly up and run
 Through every heav'nly street,
And say there's nought beneath the sun
 That's worthy of thy feet.

Bright like a sun the Saviour sits,
 And spreads eternal noon;
No ev'nings there, nor gloomy nights,
 To want the feeble noon.

Jesus, and when shall that dear day,
 That joyful hour appear,
When I shall leave this house of clay,
 To dwell amongst them there?



Say not, I have sinned, and what harm hath happened unto thee? for the Lord is long-suffering, he will in no wise let thee go. Make no tarrying to turn to the Lord, and put not off from day to day. Number not thyself among the multitude of sinners, but remember that wrath will not tarry long. Ecclus. v. 4. 7. vii. 16.

It is great folly to put off our conversion a day or an hour, but much greater to put it off from day to day; for we cannot depend on the next day, nor even the next hour. How many, alas! are now in hell, who have delayed their conversion, and been surprised by a sudden death! Every delay makes it more difficult and hazardous; for sin is ever taking deeper root. And how foolish is it to take comfort from numbers, and so hope to escape with impunity. If we sin with a multitude we shall be punished with them. The large and careless crowd is walking the broad way to hell, to everlasting punishment. Blessed God! let us not defer our conversion one hour, but turn to thee this very evening, and enable us to beg of thee repentance, grace, and forgiveness.

Lord, how secure my conscience was,
And felt no inward dread,
I was alive without the law,
And thought my sins were dead.

My hopes of heav'n were firm and bright;
But since the precept came
With a convincing power and light,
I find how vile I am.

Blessed is the man that keepeth him in wisdom, and exerciseth himself in understanding. She shall heap the treasure of mirth and joy upon him, and give him an everlasting name to heritage. Foolish men will not take hold upon her, &c., for she is far from pride and deceit. Praise is not seemly in the mouth of the ungodly, for he is not sent of the Lord. For of God cometh wisdom, &c., and the Lord shall give her unto him.—Ecclus. xiv. 21. xv. 6—10.

It belongs to right teaching, that we properly divide and apply the word, and give to every one his portion. But this requires wisdom, and consequently true conversion and the fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom. It also requires true humility of heart. For wisdom, as we read here, "is far from pride;" as indeed Solomon says, "with the lowly is wisdom." Now he who is proud, and void of wisdom, cannot, however learned he may be, teach wisely or rightly in all respects, though he may sometimes utter a truth. For he understands not even what belongs to himself, and doth not apply it to himself; how shall he understand and apply what belongs to every one of his hearers? O let us pray for upright faithful teachers.

When I have learn'd my Father's will,
I'll teach the world his ways;
My thankful lips, inspir'd with zeal,
Shall loud pronounce his praise.

While sinners do thy gospel wrong,
My spirit stands in awe;
My soul abhors a lying tongue,
But loves thy righteous law.



How great is the loving-kindness of the Lord our God, and his compassion to such as turn to him in holiness. He hath mercy on them that receive discipline. Humble thyself before thou be sick, and in the time of sins shew repentance. Let nothing hinder thee to pay thy vows in due time, and defer not until death to be justified. Before thou prayest prepare thyself; and be not as one that tempteth the Lord. Think upon the wrath that shall be at the end; from the morning until the evening the time is changed.—Ecclus. xvii. 29. xviii. 14. 21—24. 29.

MEN sin on carelessly, presuming on grace and mercy, but such will be recompensed with disgrace; for though the mercy of God be great, it is towards them that listen to instruction, and turn to him. Therefore let no one put off repentance and conversion to the bed of sickness. He may be suddenly taken away, or should he be visited with sickness, he may not retain his senses; the apparent repentance of a death-bed may be only a sigh extorted from him by the fear of hell, which will leave him in anxious uncertainty about the reality of his conversion. Let us remember the anguish and terror of God's wrath, which we may feel in the hour of death, and turn to the Lord and serve him, and that soon; for in the short space of time between evening and morning it may be said, "Time shall be no more."

The mighty God, the wise, and just,
Knows that our frame is feeble dust;
And will no heavy load impose,
Beyond the strength that he bestows.

But his eternal love is sure
To all the saints: that shall endure;
From age to age his truth shall reign,
Nor children's children hope in vain.

He that hath small understanding, and feareth God, is better than one that hath much wisdom, and transgresseth the law of the Most High. And the perfection of the fear of the Lord is wisdom. The heart that is established by advised counsel, shall fear at no time. And they that remain shall know, that there is nothing better than the fear of the Lord, and that there is nothing sweeter than to take heed unto the commandments of the Lord.—Ecclus. xix. 24. xxi. 11. xxii. 16. xxiii. 27.

PRUDENCE without piety is not true prudence, but cunning. Such men regard not the word of God, which alone makes us wise unto salvation, but follow their own lusts. Their way is smooth, or according to ch. xxi. 10, it is "made plain with stones, but at the end thereof is the pit of hell." But to fear God is wisdom and assurance through that word which is sure. There we stand fast, and fearing God as his children, need not fear anything else; but may in all circumstances stand undaunted and comforted. Posterity may learn from hence, that there is nothing better, nothing sweeter, nothing happier, than the fear of God; for whoso feareth God, him can no man overthrow.

The men that keep thy law with care,
And meditate thy word,
Grow wiser than their teachers are,
And better know the Lord.

How doth thy word my heart engage!
How well employ my tongue!
And in my tiresome pilgrimage,
Yields me a heavenly song.



Whoso feareth the Lord, will receive his discipline, and they that seek him early shall find favour. He that seeketh the law shall be filled therewith: but the hypocrite will be offended thereat. A sinful man will not be reproved, but findeth an excuse, according to his will.—Ecclus. xxxii. 14, 15, 17.

THE earlier a man is led to God, in the true fear of him, the sooner and more abundantly will he find favour, the more easy and pleasant will be his conversion, and the happier Christian will he become. But he must apply to it in good earnest; for the reason why many men miscarry, is that they are not in earnest; and then all hearing and teaching of the word only renders them worse, as may be observed in many vain teachers and students of divinity. Such will not bear reproof, but avail themselves, by way of comfort, of the bad example of other men. But they are referred to the word of God and Christ, not to the example of vain men, for they shall be judged by the word of God: and no bad example, not even of the teachers, magistrates, and parents, will excuse them.

My soul repeat his praise,
Whose mercies are so great;
Whose anger is so slow to rise,
So ready to abate.

God will not always chide,
And when his strokes are felt,
His strokes are fewer than our crimes,
And lighter than our guilt.

Nor shall affliction's rage,
Too long oppress the saint;
The God of Israel will support
His children, lest they faint.

He that believeth in the Lord taketh heed to the commandment. He that hath no experience knoweth little. When I travelled I saw many things, and I understood more than I can express. The spirit of those that fear the Lord shall live, for their hope is in him that saveth them. Whoso feareth the Lord shall not fear, nor be afraid, for he is his hope.—Ecclus. xxxii. 24. xxxiv. 10, 11. 13, 14.

WHAT a blessed thing is the true fear of God. It preserves us from all error, it suffers us not to be arrogant, but humble, and consequently wise. It leads us to pray, to place all our hope in the divine aid, and then we need fear nothing, neither men nor seducing spirits; but he who is void of the fear of God, and therefore unwise, proud, and haughty, is led by an erroneous spirit, however learned he may be; for they only have the true spirit, and attain to the right doctrine, who fear God. Lord, grant us an humble heart, which may rely on thee, preserve us from all error in life and doctrine, and be thou our trust, that we need not fear anything.

The haughty sinner have I seen,
Not fearing man nor God,
Like a tall bay tree fair and green,
Spreading his arms abroad.

And lo, he vanish'd from the ground,
Destroy'd by hands unseen;
Nor root, nor branch, nor leaf was found
Where all that pride had been.

But mark the man of righteousness,
His several steps attend;
True pleasure runs through all his ways,
And peaceful is his end.



Do not the tears run down the widow's cheeks? and is not her cry against him that causeth them to fall? He that serveth the Lord shall be accepted with favour, and his prayer shall reach unto the clouds; and till it come nigh, he will not be comforted; will not depart, till the Most High shall behold.—Ecclus. xxxv. 15—17.

How bitterly will the tears of widows and orphans cry against some hard, unjust, and unmerciful men, so that an unmerciful judgment will befal them. Luther said, he had rather have powerful emperors and kings against him than one Christian who sighed and prayed against him. How powerful then is the fervent prayer, which is offered up, not against, but for others and ourselves. It will certainly pierce the clouds, and not cease till God beholds and sends help. O Lord excite us to such a faithful, fervent, and importunate prayer, for us, for our friends and thy whole church; that tears, prayer, and supplication may be our armour, whereby we may obtain a succession of victories and blessings for ourselves and thy church.

Let sinners and their wicked rage
 Be humbled to the dust;
Shall not the God of truth engage
 To vindicate the just?

The cruel persecuting race
 Must feel his dreadful sword;
Awake, my soul, to praise the grace
 And justice of the Lord.

When I was yet young, or ever I went abroad, I desired wisdom openly in my prayer, I prayed for her before the temple, and will seek her out even to the end. I stretched forth my hands to the heaven above, and bewailed my ignorance of her. I directed my soul unto her, and I found her in pureness; I have had my heart joined with her from the beginning, therefore shall I not be forsaken.—Ecclus. li. 13, 14. 19, 20.

How happy would young persons be, if they would pray for true wisdom at an early period, and turn to the Lord in the days of their youth, like young king Josiah! the Lord would hear them and be their friend throughout life. But we must earnestly wrestle for it, lift up our hands, and pray, then shall we be enlightened, and know our folly, our sinfulness, and the Saviour of sinners, whereby our illumination will be complete. He whose prayer is not so earnest, as to lead him to a sense of his own folly and sin, is not yet enlightened or wise, though he may be ever so learned; the sense of our folly is the beginning of our light and wisdom; how can he write or speak of light who has not yet seen the first glimmerings of it! He is blind and deceives himself. Lord, enlighten us, that we may know our folly, and turn to thee soon, this very evening.

My God permit my tongue,
This joy, to call thee mine:
And let my early cries prevail,
To taste thy love divine.

The shadow of thy wings,
My soul in safety keeps;
I follow where my father leads,
And he supports my steps.



How happeneth it, Israel, that thou art in thine enemy's land? Thou hast forsaken the fountain of wisdom. For if thou hadst walked in the way of God, thou shouldest have dwelled in peace for ever. My children suffer patiently, &c. Be of good cheer, O my children, cry unto the Lord, and he shall deliver you from the power and hand of the enemies. For my hope is in the Everlasting, that he will save you, and joy is come unto me from the Holy One, because of the mercy which shall soon come unto you from the Everlasting, our Saviour.—Baruch iii. 10, 12, 13. iv. 21, 22. 25.

In time of war and other troubles, men must be patient, and immediately endeavour to discover and confess their sins, for they are the cause of their misfortunes. They have forsaken the fountain of wisdom, and have not walked in the way of God; they have in particular laid aside their humility, else they might have dwelt in peace for ever, and have escaped other distresses which God uses to humble them and bring them to a penitent sense of their sins. We should therefore in our trouble think penitentially upon our sins, and in the first place implore true repentance, grace, and remission of sins, that our troubles may draw and convert us to the Lord, and we may become his dutiful children. Then may we in faith solicit *temporal* aid, and the *Everlasting*, our Saviour, will soon shew us his mercy.

My watchful enemies combine
To tempt my feet astray;
They flatter with a base design
To make my soul their prey.

And thus consider ye throughout all ages, th that put their trust in Him shall be overc is no hard matter for many to be shut up hands of a few; and with the God of hea all one to deliver with a great multitu small company. For the victory comet heaven, and standeth not in the multitud host. The Lord himself will overthrow t fore our face.—Maccab. ii. 61. iii. 18, 19, 2

How weak soever we may find ourselves a our spiritual and temporal enemies, if we t God alone, are resigned, and only desire t will may be done, he will give us victory in this faithful resignation we must not l sumptuous, and concerned for our own c honour, but for God's. For in chap. v. 6 captains said, "Let us get us a name; they were slain, because (ver. 61, 62,) they t to do some valiant act, and were not of th of those, by whose hands deliverance wa unto Israel. And (ver. 67,) certain prie sirous to show their valour were slain. God putteth ambition and arrogance to co at all times. Yet vain-glory is at present of the world, and the honour and cause o are quite forgotten.

Just are thy ways, and true thy word,
Great rock of my secure abode;
Who is a God beside the Lord?
Or where's a refuge like our God?

'Tis he that girds me with his might,
Gives me his holy sword to wield;
And while with sin and hell I fight,
Spreads his salvation for my shield.

For it is not a light thing to do wickedly against the laws of God; but the time following shall declare these things. For not as with other nations, when the Lord patiently forbeareth to punish, till they be come to the fulness of their sins, so dealeth he with us, lest that being come to the height afterwards, he should take vengeance of us.—Mac. iv. 17. vi. 14, 15.

THE Israelites, and even the priests, followed the heathen games (chap. iv. 14—16,) and God sent those heathens, whose games they imitated, to punish them, and then we read, "It is not a light thing to do wickedly against the laws of God." We also should attend to this; for how many games, dances, and vanities have we borrowed from a certain nation! Wherefore God hath sent them to punish us, and though we have beaten them, he hath soon healed their wounds, because we no sooner take breath, than we spend our time, especially in winter, in games, operas, plays, and vanities, and in the spring we take the field again, after so bad a preparation. Hence God at this time embitters our sinful diversions, and connives at us no longer, but puts a stop to sin by his punishments. If any one escape with impunity, and grow secure, to him may be applied the words of chap. vii. 35. "Thou hast not yet escaped the judgment of Almighty God, who seeth all things."

O may thy pard'ning grace be nigh,
Lest we should faint, despair and die,
Thus shall our better thoughts approve
The methods of thy chast'ning love.

Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel, which being interpreted, is, God with us.—Matt. i. 23. See Isa. vii. 14. viii. 10.

By the incarnation of the Son of God, God is with us men, and even with the greatest sinners for their conversion; how much more is he with the faithful! Now if God be with and for us, who can be against us? Nay, he is not only with us, but in us too, and hath pitched his tent within us, as it is written, Behold the tent or tabernacle of God is among men, and he will dwell among them, and they themselves shall be his people, and he himself, God with us, will be their God. For, though we be miserable sinners, that will not prevent him: on the contrary, for that very reason he is with us as our Immanuel, and Jesus who saves us from our sins. Were we not great sinners we should not need so great a Redeemer, who is God himself. The name Immanuel, like the name of Jesus, ought to be our watchword, our comfort under every evil, in our spiritual and temporal warfare. At the approach therefore of an enemy, a battle, or other distress, we should cry out, Here is Immanuel. Lord, impress thy name of Jesus and Immanuel deeply upon our hearts, that it may be to us a balsam and a strong fort, which may administer comfort and help to us in distress and death.

Hail, great Immanuel, all divine,
In thee thy Father's glories shine:
The brightest, sweetest, fairest one,
That eyes have seen or angels known.



pent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. O eneration of vipers, who hath warned you to flee rom the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore ruits meet for repentance. And think not to say ithin yourselves, We have Abraham to our fa-her. And now also the axe is laid unto the root f the tree; therefore every tree which bringeth ot forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into he fire.—Matt. iii. 2. 7—10.

HN, by preaching repentance, prepares the way Christ; he points out to every one his parti-ar bosom sin, and chiefly to the Pharisees, who ught they had no need of repentance, they re in danger of being hewn down and cast into fire. Repentance is necessary for men of the vest character, for it is not merely abstinence m gross sins, but a change of heart and mind. e true penitent will renounce his bosom sin, we boast in vain that we are Protestants; hout faith, without the mind and works of a e Protestant, we shall be cast into the fire. d alas! of how many men and places may it said, that the axe is laid to the root of the tree; , sword, or death, are at hand. How neces-y is true repentance of heart, to guard us against ng deceived by mere external appearance.

'Twas for my sins, my dearest Lord
Hung on the cursed tree;
And groan'd away a dying life,
For thee, my soul, for thee.

From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.—Matt. iv. 17.

THE kingdom of heaven appertains to those who repent. And the first mark of repentance is poverty of spirit; whence Jesus saith, chap. v. 3. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." John preached repentance, Jesus preaches it here, and so did his apostles afterward. Thus true repentance is necessary for all, and the beginning of it is to acknowledge ourselves poor miserable sinners, depraved by nature, and totally void of any righteousness or worth of our own; to confess our nakedness, to drop all the fig leaves of vain excuses and false comforts, to lay only our poverty, our wants before God, to accuse ourselves and plead guilty of all our sins, seeking mercy from Christ alone. If we do this, we are blessed, and the kingdom of heaven is ours. This poverty of spirit is both the first and the last foundation laid in the heart; the faithful are more and more grounded in poverty of spirit, the nearer they approach to their consummation. If we are deficient in this poverty of spirit, and humility of heart, our repentance is not begun, and the most learned and grave character is no better than a proud Pharisee.

Pure are the joys above the sky,
And all the region peace;
No wanton lips, nor envious eye,
Can see or taste the bliss.

Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.—Matt. v. 4.

After the penitent has discovered his poverty, and his sinful misery, the next step is, to mourn, to possess our minds with godly sorrow; for by the godly sorrow and anguish of soul, sin and the world are embittered to us, the evil hard heart is attacked, cast down, and broken, softened, amended, and changed; it has taken off from all self-righteousness and every false comfort, and prepared to receive true comfort; for Jesus is come to comfort them that mourn, them that mourn in Sion; not them that feel only a worldly sorrow, but who mourn and are dejected on account of their sins; they only, and none else, shall be comforted and lifted up; for the Lord raises up all those that are cast down, and they shall be blessed. He therefore, who hath no godly sorrow for his sins, is an impenitent unhappy man. Let every one pray for genuine poverty of spirit, and for a mournful broken heart on account of his sins; let him guard against false comfort, and not rest, till God comforts and lifts him up, which comfort will not fail.

Blest are the men whose bowels move,
And melt with sympathy and love;
From Christ the Lord shall they obtain
Like sympathy and love again.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.—Matt. v. 6.

When we feel our poverty, and are thus divested of our own riches, our own righteousness, and mourn with godly sorrow for our sins, then shall we desire, hunger and thirst after the righteousness of Christ, and the comfort and peace it contains; and this hunger and thirst constitutes the third point essential to repentance. A faithful soul will gladly quit the rags of his own righteousness, and desire only to be found in Christ, and to cover himself with his righteousness, and will offer nothing to God, but Christ and his blood. This desire, this hunger and thirst, is itself blessedness, for it results from faith, and ends in fulness. Such a soul shall be filled, if not soon, yet in due time, and shall experience what is said by David, Psal. xxii. 26, and by Mary, Luke i. 53. Lord Jesus, take from me entirely mine own righteousness, let me hunger only after thine, and obtain at all times, particularly in the hour of death, food and raiment, shelter, and plenty for my soul, that I may rejoice before thee evermore.

How rich are thy provisions, Lord,
Thy table furnished from above,
Thy fruits of life o'erspread the board,
The cup o'erflows with heavenly love.



Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. The world endeavours to possess the earth, and defend property by violence, but Christ tells us, that the meek shall inherit the earth. Luther. *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*—Matt. v. 5. 7—10.

THEY therefore, who are not possessed of meekness, mercy, and a pure heart, are not blessed. Let every one examine himself this evening, and he will find cause for repentance, and to pray for remission of sins, and for the Holy Spirit, that he may work in him all these essential parts of true Christianity; then he will have the comfortable hope of salvation, he will become a child of God, an heir of the kingdom of heaven, and goodness and mercy will follow him all the days of his life.

Bless'd are the meek, who stand afar
From rage and passion, noise and war;
God will secure their happy state,
And plead their cause against the great.

Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, &c. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid, &c. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven.—Matt. v. 13, 14. 16.

ALL Christians, especially teachers and heads of families, should be the salt of the earth, and the light of the world, and should enlighten others by their lives; they must therefore themselves be enlightened and converted, else they will be unsavoury salt, and blind guides. How shall such men season others and preserve them from perdition? Can the blind lead the blind? are the words of Christ himself. Nor must they conceal the good, through fear of men, but let their light shine, that men may see their good works, and praise not them, but their Father which is in heaven. How can an unconverted man or teacher do this? For what good works has he? How necessary therefore is it for teachers to be enlightened and converted, for the sake of their congregations, whom they are to instruct and convince by their own practise, that what they teach is possible. Every child may comprehend this.

The gospel bids the dead revive,
Sinners, obey the voice and live:
Dry bones are rais'd and cloth'd afresh,
And hearts of stone are turn'd to flesh.

May but this grace my soul renew,
Let sinners gaze and hate me too;
The word that saves me does engage
A sure defence from all their rage.



I say unto you that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. Beware of false prophets, &c. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father who is in heaven.—Matt. v. 20. vii. 15. 21.

THE law requires something more than a mere outward pharisaical righteousness; therefore Christ affirms, ch. v. that he who is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment, and that he who looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. Hence we should, in order to arrive at true repentance, look into the law, and we shall find it spiritual, punishing the evil desires and thoughts of the heart and spirit. Then will the Spirit of God lead us to poverty of spirit, to mourning, divest us of self-righteousness, we shall hunger and thirst after the righteousness of Christ, and obtain justification by faith, together with inward righteousness and holiness of life, that we may do the will of God. Without this, even a teacher is like the foolish man who built his house on the sand.

No more, my God, I boast no more
Of all the duties I have done;
I quit the hopes I held before,
To trust the merits of thy Son.

Now for the love I bear his name,
What was my gain I count my loss;
My former pride I call my shame,
And nail my glory to his cross.

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father, which is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him? Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.—Matt. vii. 11, 12.

How admirably are the law and the gospel here connected! God will attend to our prayer and give us all good things, this is his gospel; and we are enjoined to do unto our neighbour whatsoever we would that he should do unto us, this is law. Now, O my God, if we being evil can give good gifts unto our children, how much more wilt thou our kind Father in heaven, who art love and goodness itself, give us every good gift, and especially the Holy Spirit, that most essential gift, which we now beg at thy hands. And if it be thy will that we perform what we promise, thou wilt perform and keep what thou hast promised to us; that is, thou wilt hear our prayer, which thou hast promised and sworn. O grant us therefore thy Spirit, the Spirit of faith and love, that we may do to other men whatsoever we would that they should do unto us. Impress this deeply on our hearts, since it is the law and the prophets.

Yes, Lord I'll still on thee depend,
My Father sure will prove my friend;
And 'tis a pleasure to be poor,
And live on thine exhaustless store.



Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end, shall be saved. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are numbered. Fear not ye therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.—Matt. x. 22. 29—31. xi. 12.

He who would be truly converted, must through assisting grace be in earnest and use violence, he must take the kingdom of God by force, and earnestly strive to enter in at the strait gate; for there is no trifling with the word of God. He who is not in earnest, will grow worse. The hatred of the world will be no obstacle to him who is in earnest. He will confess Christ freely before the world, and not fear, though he should be hated, mocked, and persecuted; for not a sparrow, not a hair from our heads, can fall to the ground without God, for he hath numbered all our hairs. These words have been highly comfortable to many persecuted Christians in their imprisonment.

Yes, Lord, the children may depend
On thy paternal care:
Thou wilt the father and the friend
In every thing appear.

With open hand and liberal heart,
Thou wilt our wants supply:
To them thy benefits impart,
And no good thing deny.

This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, &c. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. Take heed, and beware of the leaven (the hypocrisy) *of the Pharisees, and of the Sadducees.*—Matt. xv. 8, 9. 19. xvi. 6.

MANY content themselves with mere outward worship, and draw nigh to God with their lips, not with their hearts; these are Pharisees and hypocrites. Others neither hear nor read God's word, but are profligate, bold scoffers, and libertines; these are the Sadducees of our days, who in their hearts believe not a resurrection. Both abominations, hypocrisy, and profaneness, arise from men's not rightly knowing their own hearts. He who would truly repent, be justified and saved, let him beseech God to give him a true knowledge of his own heart; for from this impure fountain springs every evil. Murder, theft, perjury, and blasphemy, all reside in the heart. O that hypocrisy and open profaneness had not gained access to persons of learning and distincton, and thus prevailed in the world; for these two things are the causes of the late calamities. Lord amend thou our hearts, our courts, and our families; then may we hope for better times.

Lord, thou hast search'd and seen me through,
Thine eye commands with piercing view
My rising and my resting hours,
My heart and flesh with all their powers.

Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.—Matt. xvi. 18. *Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.* Luke xii. 32.

THE real rock and corner stone is Christ himself. If we turn to him alone, build our hopes upon him, rely only upon his merits, and follow him as his sheep; then we belong to his flock, his church; all the gates of hell shall not prevail against us, and we shall stand against storms and floods of temptations. Men may endeavour to make us fall, but the Lord will support us. Though we are weak, our rock, in whom we trust, is strong and firm enough, and cannot be shaken. Though we are inwardly blind, ignorant, and like lost sheep, our Saviour and Shepherd is our light and wisdom, and will not suffer us to go astray to the ruin of our souls. And though we are a little flock, our great Shepherd is about us with his whole host of angels, and therefore we have nothing to fear from any of our enemies within or without; for it is our Father's pleasure, joy, and delight, to give us the kingdom, of which neither men nor devils shall deprive us.

Lo, what a glorious corner stone,
The Jewish builders did refuse;
But God hath built his church thereon,
In spite of envy and the Jews.

Great God, the work is all divine,
The joy and wonder of our eyes;
This is the day that proves it thine,
The day that saw our Saviour rise.

Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Woe unto the world, because of offences, &c. If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee, &c.—Matt. xviii. 3. 7, 8.

THE disciples entertained the vain thought of who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Jesus placed a child among them and said, that except they were converted, and became humble and innocent, like that child, they should not enter into the kingdom of heaven. We see from these and the rest of his words, how difficult it is to enter into the kingdom of heaven. We must be born again, become quite new men, as humble and innocent as a child, be truly converted. We must offend no man, not even a child; for God denounces a woe against such offenders, and says (ver. 6.) that it would be better for them to have been drowned in the midst of the sea. Nor must we offend ourselves, that is, we must not be discouraged or dissuaded from following that which is good, but remove every hindrance to our virtue, even if it were as dear to us as our hands, or feet, or eyes. We should crucify our favourite desire, and cast off even our bosom sin. We see, how necessary it is, that we should be in earnest, and how many deceive themselves with false hopes of heaven; for how can this child-like humility and innocence of heart consist with vain-glory, the queen of the world? And who is as careful and earnest as he might be, in avoiding offences?

If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven. And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.—Matt. xviii. 19. xxi. 22.

THE first words shew us the great use of united prayer. God heareth prayer in general, if but one individual believer applies to him; how much more, if two or three, or more, agree to ask the same thing, whether they are personally met together or not, if they only ask for the same thing, they shall certainly receive it from their Father, who is in heaven: as a common parent will grant the thing, which not one, but all his children ask of him, how much more will our heavenly Father hear his children, when they unite in prayer to him! We should therefore excite and call upon each other to pray for such things as we need, particularly for faithful labourers, and that the Lord would be pleased to frustrate the unwearied endeavours of the enemies of righteousness. God will certainly hear this prayer and help us. And we shall then see which of the two will prevail, the enemy or the devout petitioner to God. For we shall certainly receive all that we ask in faith, relying upon the word of promise; for, says Luther, if the word is on my side, I have all things, every thing will follow which the word has promised, for God cannot suffer his word to stop short.

'Twas well, my soul, Christ died for thee,
And shed his vital blood;
Appeas'd stern justice on the tree,
And then arose to God.

And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Watch therefore, &c. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh. And they that were ready, &c.—Matt. xxiv. 39. 42. 44. xxv. 10.

As men were very secure before the flood, so also will they be before the last judgment, these will despise the warnings of God, as those disregarded the preaching of Noah. This security prevails already, and will prevail more and more, notwithstanding the awful judgments which have actually commenced; for the people of our days are like those of old, intent only upon a life of pleasure, upon eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, without taking thought for their souls and salvation. And this is a certain mark of the sudden approach of still greater judgments. Even the less among them content themselves, like the foolish virgins, with mere outward appearance and worship, without the unction of the Holy Ghost, without preparing and dressing themselves for the marriage of the Lamb. They defer their preparation, till death comes at an hour when they think not. Thus unprepared, they hope to make the last sigh avail, and to buy oil, but it is then in many cases too late, and the door is shut. O that we may therefore be enabled immediately to awake and turn to the Lord, and then continue to watch and keep ourselves ready!

The judge prepares his throne on high,
The frighted earth and seas
Avoid the fury of his eye,
And flee before his face.



Before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, &c. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my father, &c. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.—Matt. xxv. 32—34. 41.

We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; but how little is this considered! Men flatter themselves that they shall be accepted indiscriminately as Christians; but it is expressly said, he shall separate them one from another, and set the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on his left. He calls those blessed, and these cursed; invites these to everlasting joy, and adjudges those to everlasting fire. To the goats not those only belong, who have grievously sinned, but such men also as have neglected to do good, to shew mercy, and have not been faithful and profitable to him; of these it is said, "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness;" whereas the other is called a good and faithful servant, and invited to bliss; nay he receives the talent, which the slothful servant had hid or misapplied; for unto every one that hath, and through assisting grace faithfully applies it, more shall be given in the present time, as well as in eternity.

The saint who triumphs o'er his sins,
God owneth for his son;
The whole creation shall reward
The conquests he has won.

Take heed what you hear: with what m
mete, it shall be measured to you again:
you that hear shall more be given. Fo
hath, to him it shall be given: and he
not, from him shall be taken even that
hath.—Mark iv. 24, 25.

THESE words are frequently repeated in
pels, particularly in the parable of the t
vants, Matt. xxv. and Luke xix. where
prefaced with, "I say unto you." This
frequent repetition of the words, should
impression upon us, and excite us to d
fully with all that we have, especially
word of God, and the several means
with all our spiritual and temporal gift
ply them rightly, for our own edifica
that of other men. For with what m
fidelity we mete unto God, in the use of
and all his gifts, in prayer and works o
or whatever it be, he will measure unto
with additions, a full measure running o
he will improve our gifts, our talents, and
portunities of trafficking with it. An enl
teacher, who is not faithful in the u
knowledge and gifts, falls back immedia
such apostates become the most danger
God suffers them for their guilt to fall
less, unprofitable things, takes from th
talent and the opportunity of doing g
gives it to others who are more faith
have often observed.

He who abhors and fears to sin,
Whose heart is pure, whose hands are cl
Him shall the Lord the Saviour bless,
And clothe his soul with righteousness.

All things are possible to him that believeth. Have faith in God. Verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, &c. he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.—Mark ix. 23. xi. 22—24. Matt. xxvi. 41.

How powerful is faith! Jesus invites us to believe, and worketh faith in us, by the words, "Believe that ye receive them." If we believe, we shall have whatsoever we pray for, consequently nothing will be too great for us to ask, no enemy will be too strong for us. However Satan, sin, and the world may tempt us, however great our difficulties and hindrances may be, however high and insurmountable the hills may seem before us, by the prayer of faith we shall remove and surmount them. We cannot expect to be exempted from trials and temptations; but if we watch and pray, we shall not fall into them so as to be injured; nothing shall exceed our ability or hurt us, for we shall obtain and enjoy the fruit of our victory at last, and derive such a blessing from it, that all seeming hindrances will only forward us.

Not by the terrors of a slave
Do saints perform God's will;
But with the noblest pow'rs they have,
His sweet commands fulfil.

They find access at ev'ry hour,
To God within the veil:
Hence they derive a quick'ning power,
And joys that never fail.

And (Jesus) began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy, and saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death, &c. And he saith, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee, take away this cup from me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?—Mark xiv. 33, 34. 36. xv. 34.

THE passion of Jesus is the most powerful motive to a sorrowful confession of sins and repentance. Jesus began on the Mount of Olives to be amazed and heavy. His soul was sorrowful even unto death. He wrestles with death, eternal death; and his sweat in the anguish of his soul is like drops of blood falling on the ground, and on the cross he complains of being forsaken by God. And all this for our sins. How can I continue to love and practise sin, and not rather regard it as a great abomination, and hate and lament it, since it brought upon my Saviour such inexpressible suffering, and drew from him that bloody sweat? Now, whosoever misapplies the sufferings of Christ for his own carnal security, and self-indulgence, increaseth his own condemnation; but he who is led by it to repentance, may make it his highest comfort. Jesus hath borne and atoned for all his sins, he hath complained on the cross of being forsaken. He prayed for him on the Mount of Olives, and on the cross, and however feeble and imperfect the prayer of the sinner may be, that of Jesus is full of faith, earnest and importunate, more and more fervent, yet more resigned; and this prayer of Jesus comprehends his, and is as such accepted by God.

the angel said unto them, Fear not; for behold, bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall to all people; for unto you is born this day, in e city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the rd.—Luke ii. 10, 11.

e stand in awe, like the shepherds, and wait he consolation of Israel to comfort our hearts, may imagine an angel accosting us with, ar not: for behold, I bring you good tidings eat joy." Which words, says Luther, ought) always present to our minds. Every kind ar should vanish before the mild infant Je- and our believing hearts glow with rapture, his joy shall be to all people, and consequent- us; for to us also a child is born, to us a s given. We would embrace him in our s, as Simeon took him up in his arms. And may we sing praises to God and say, "Glory God in the highest," &c. He, our Saviour, our Lord, will with his power protect us. ill enable us, like Simeon, to depart in peace, ive us all things, for he hath already given e highest gift in giving his Son.

Behold the grace appears,
The promise is fulfilled;
Mary, the wondrous virgin bears,
And Jesus is the child.

To bring the glorious news,
A heavenly form appears;
He tells the shepherds of their joys,
And banishes their fears.

Blessed are ye when men shall hate you joice ye in that day, and leap for joy: your reward is great in heaven, &c. Wo when all men shall speak well of you, vi. 22, 23. 26.

To do good and suffer ill, is the charac the true followers of Christ. Christ r man's withered hand on the Sabbath, vinced the Pharisees that he did not break the Sabbath. Yet he was oblige their malice; for we read that they w with madness, and communed one with what they might do to Jesus. Thus Pharisees of our days are convinced of and are at a loss for an answer, they with madness, and only vilify and abuse Jesus persisted in doing good, in spit malice, for he spent that same night i and on the morrow chose the twelve hereby shewing that they who are to el dain teachers and ministers should be fervent prayer. Jesus still further pers doing good; for when the sick multitud to touch him, a virtue went forth from he healed them all. How much more w tue proceed from him into our souls, an all! If it be our lot to suffer for doing should also persevere, and not be deterr malice of the world; we should be h rejoice, for our reward will be great in Whereas Jesus denounces a woe again of whom all men speak well. This is sign. A minister therefore should not *nour among men*, but the glory of God

The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.—Luke x. 2.

How necessary is this prayer now, when the harvest is great, but the labourers daily decrease. This is a consideration for all Christians, for all churches, and especially those who elect their own ministers. If congregations and patrons would pray for faithful teachers, they might have them. Before Jesus chose the twelve, he spent the preceding night in prayer. It was said of the great Seckondorff, that no civil matters, however important, gave him so much anxiety as the choice of a parish priest upon his own estate, and that he spent the whole preceding night in prayer. But few are there who imitate his care and devotion. How many choose only from favour or other improper motives, and pay no regard to true godliness; they perhaps hearken to the best bidder, or expect the candidates to beg and solicit promotion. The faithful ought therefore to pray the more earnestly for upright labourers. And they are encouraged to pray for them in faith, since Jesus, who did not prescribe any forms of prayer, yet furnishes us with the very words of this prayer; so that we may be assured it is acceptable to God, and he will hear us.

The God of Jacob chose the hill
Of Zion for his ancient rest;
And Zion is his dwelling still,
His church is with his presence blest.

And when he came to himself, he said, I will arise and go to my father, &c. And he arose, &c. But when he was yet a great way off, &c. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, &c. But the father said to his servants, bring forth the best robe, &c. Luke xv. 17—22.

CHRIST shews throughout this chapter, in three parables, that the Pharisees spoke truth in saying, "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." Jesus, the faithful Shepherd, seeks all the lost sheep; the Holy Spirit restores in us the lost image of God, and the Father receives the lost but penitent son with a thousand demonstrations of joy. But how does this happen? The poor sinner falls into great concern and trouble, and then comes to himself, which is the very end for which Christ sends distress. He will arise and go to his father, and he doth arise. Some make good resolutions, and design to turn, but go no farther. The sinner must proceed to action before he can have assurance of his own conversion, that his father hath met him, prevented him with his grace and pity, and given him the kiss of peace. The sinner blushes and is humbled at this, confessing his sins, and that he is not worthy to be called his son. But the father refuses to hear any more of sin, orders immediately the best robe to be brought, and prepares a joyful feast for the repenting sinner.

Take off his clothes of shame and sin,
(The Father gives command)
Dress him in garments white and clean,
With rings adorn his hand.

And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.—Luke xviii. 1.

THE parable is that of an unjust judge, who delivered an oppressed widow from her adversary, merely to get rid of her importunity; upon which Christ says (ver. 7.) "And shall not God avenge his own elect, who cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you, he will avenge them speedily," &c. After this Christ shews (ver. 13, 14.) from the example and prayer of the penitent publican, how penitently and humbly men ought to pray: "God be merciful to me a sinner?" "Every one," says he, "that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted." Men are apt to think it sufficient, if at the last they do but utter the ejaculation of the publican; but his repentance and humility of heart were essential to his prayer. Are we enabled to present ourselves before God, as true and humble penitents, in poverty of spirit, oppressed by our spiritual or temporal enemies, then let us pray without ceasing to God day and night. God will speedily deliver us, for he is not an unjust but a most righteous judge, and our most merciful Father, reconciled to us in Christ.

Behold how sinners disagree,
The publican and Pharisee,
One doth his righteousness proclaim,
The other owns his guilt and shame.

The Lord their different language knows,
And different answers he bestows;
The humble soul with grace he crowns,
Whilst on the proud his anger frowns.

And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. Thus prayed Jesus on the mount of Olives; and on the cross he prayed for his executioners, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* To the malefactor he said, *Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise;* and his last prayer was, *Father into thy hands I commend my spirit.*—Luke xxii. 44. xxiii. 34. 43. 46.

How earnest should Christians be, since Jesus shewed himself so earnest for our salvation, on the Mount of Olives, as to struggle with death, and pray so fervently, that his sweat was as if were drops of blood. Lord, take away from us all lukewarmness, carelessness, impenitence, and slothfulness, that we may pray more and more fervently. Let thy sufferings and prayers on the mount of Olives turn to our benefit, and make our imperfect prayer acceptable to the Father. Thou didst pray for us malefactors, who crucified thee by our sins, and didst commend our spirit along with thine into the hands of thy Father; grant that we may derive comfort from this, especially in the hour of death. Do thou thyself receive our spirits into thy hands, and give us assurance, that we shall be with thee in Paradise.

Lord, shall thy bright example shine
In vain before my eyes?
Give me a soul akin to thine,
To love my enemies.

The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.—Luke xxiv. 34. 36.

THE Lord is risen indeed! This has been, and still is the great word of comfort; for it signifies, Jesus died and was buried for our sins, he hath discharged them all, as our surety, and left them in the grave; else God would not have delivered him from the power of death. But he rose indeed for our justification, when by his resurrection he was acquitted from the sins of the world, and so he actually restored to us eternal righteousness and eternal peace. Hence he so frequently repeats to his disciples, "Peace be with you." He desired by his resurrection to restore peace of mind to all that mourned; therefore he first appeared to the afflicted Mary Magdalene, next to the fallen Peter, and ordered the first notice of his resurrection to be given to all who are afflicted, and to him by name. He appeared to the two disciples, who walked to Emmaus and were sad, and opened to them the scriptures; and to Thomas he shewed his side and the print of the nails. All which shews that Jesus being risen, will gladly bring comfort and peace to us who mourn, by the power of his resurrection; and therefore says to us all, "Peace be with you."

Down to the shades of death
Christ bow'd his awful head;
But he arose to live and reign
When death itself was dead.

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wild even so must the Son of man be lifted up whosoever believeth in him should not peri have eternal life. He that believeth on t hath everlasting life: and he that believe the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath o abideth on him.—John iii. 14, 15. 36.

We are all lost sinners by nature; but l should continue in that state, God in his i love hath found a propitiation, when he lift Christ on the cross, as Moses, by way of had lifted up a serpent. Then Jesus, our s took upon himself our guilt, and fully a and paid for it on the cross, that all who b in him might not perish, but have everl life. He who doth not receive the Son, th propitiatory sacrifice, the wrath of God a on him. Alas! the poor libertines: do th see the wrath of God in the present terrible ments? The type of the brazen serpent the order in which we are to receive the S God. The Israelites felt the pain of the b the fiery serpent; but when they looked o brazen serpent they were healed. So w those who feel the bite of sin, that old se and lament it with a penitent heart, should up to Jesus in faith; thereby shall we be h and saved.

Such was the pity of our God,
He lov'd the race of man so well,
He sent his Son to bear the load
Of sins, and save our souls from hell.

If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him and he would have given thee living water. But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.—John iv. 10. 14.

We may suppose Jesus to say the same thing to us at this time; and if we pray to him, he will give us that water, the Holy Ghost. Although after much prayer we should not perceive ourselves to have obtained a drop of it, yet we must still persevere in prayer, and the least drop will become in us a spring, which will run through troubles and death into eternal life. As the waters mentioned in Ezek. xlvii. ran deeper and deeper, so the gifts of the Holy Ghost will increase in us, and we shall receive more and more light, willingness and power, to know and do the will of God, that as it was the meat of Christ (ver. 34,) to do the will of his Father, so it will be our meat. Lord, grant and improve in me all the gifts of thy Holy Spirit, the water of life, that the same may flow in me from death to eternal life.

To see my Saviour and my Lord,
I my own self resign;
By thee to hope and life restor'd,
I will be ever thine.

Wilt thou be made whole? (Jesus said unto him,) *Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.*—John v. 6. 14.

JESUS now stands before us, and asks us, "Wilt thou be made whole?" The answer is, Yes, my Saviour, I desire to be made whole, especially in my soul; I have been long infirm, and no one can help me but thou alone. And will not Jesus heal us? Most certainly he will. But few men seek the health of their souls; for they feel not their disease. For this cause God often sends a long sickness, or some other trouble, that during the affliction they may be led to a penitent sense of their sins, then he will remove or mitigate their bodily sickness or other distress. So that he still puts this question to a sick or afflicted man, "Wilt thou be made whole?" or wilt thou have other relief, but wilt thou have it upon condition of acting as becomes a Christian who is born again, and is desirous of being prepared for the enjoyment of the saints in light? And to him, who has been relieved by Jesus, the words may be well applied, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee;" for it is no uncommon thing for men to grow worse after their recovery.

I love the Lord: he heard my cries,
And pitied every groan;
Long as I live, when troubles rise,
I'll hasten to his throne.



How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not that honour that cometh from God only. This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. No man can come unto me, except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him.—John v. 44. vi. 29. 44.

FAITH is the great point; but everything is not faith which passes for such. There are two principal obstacles to it. Whosoever is the slave of ambition, is not possessed of faith; for it is here expressly said, "How can ye believe, who receive honour one of another," &c. Which words formerly convinced me, that my faith was not of the right sort. So we read, chap. xii. 42, 43, that many among the chief rulers believed on him, but not perfectly, so as to confess Christ; for it is said, that "they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." Who is there that considers this danger of ambition! The next obstacle to faith is, *that men*, before they are convinced of their sins, create as it were a faith of their own, the mere work of their imagination, by which they deceive themselves. Faith is the work of God. His Holy Spirit produces it in the humble contrite heart, and himself draws us to his Son. It is no small comfort to the penitent, that they have not to form a faith of their own. God himself having revealed everything necessary in his word; by the Spirit operating with the scripture we are made wise to salvation.

Tremble, my soul, and kiss the Son!
Sinners, obey the Saviour's call:
Else your damnation hastens on,
And hell gapes wide to wait your fall.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am the bread of life, and the bread that I will give is my flesh. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, &c. and he dwelleth in me, and I in him. Lord to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.—John vi. 47, 48. 51. 54. 56. 68.

JESUS here again testifies as he had done chap. v. 24, by a double affirmation, that he that believeth on him, hath everlasting life, that he hath it already, and is already saved; we should therefore believe what Jesus so frequently repeats, and so solemnly affirms. He calls himself the bread of life, and gives his flesh for meat; so that eating his flesh and drinking his blood amounts to the same as believing on him. Faith therefore is no dead principle, or mere speculation; but is alive, and has its object, Christ the bread of life. Hence the faithful, like St. Peter, experience his words to be the words of eternal life, and do not, like other men, draw back from him, in order to be something, and effect something for themselves. For when Jesus declared, that it was necessary for them to hear and receive their knowledge from the Father, and the gift of faith from him, they were offended, and went back. Lord Jesus, preserve us from this by thy grace. Amen.

The Lord of life this table spread
With his own flesh and dying blood,
We on the rich provision feed,
And taste the wine, and bless our God.

If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, &c. Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people, who knoweth not the law are cursed.—John vii. 17. 47—49.

SUCH is the case at present. Many of the common people, or unlearned are, like these officers of the Pharisees, convinced by the gospel, whilst many of the learned do not discern the truth. What is the reason? They will not do the will of God. Hence they cannot be convinced of the truth, though it were ever so plainly delivered to them. Their perverse will blinds them, and prevents their humbling themselves. The other reason is, they conclude from their knowledge and specious appearance, that they know and love God, and ask, like the Pharisees, "Are we blind also?" but see the answer of Christ in John ix. 41. If any one acknowledge himself blind, the Lord will enable him to see. Some have eyes enough for other things, but none for this; they imagine to have a far greater degree of light than all their experienced teachers; the consequence is their sin remaineth, and they are proud fools. If therefore we desire to know the truth, and rightly to instruct others in it, we must do the will of God, be enabled to consider ourselves as blind, and patiently hear doctrine and reproof, like Nicodemus, who was so convinced of the truth, that (ver. 51.) he even contradicted the Pharisees. We must thirst after grace and truth, and so shall be fulfilled in us the promise of ver. 37, 38.

I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whoso liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die, Believest thou this? She (Martha) *saith unto him, yea, Lord, I believe, &c.* Yet she afterwards said, *Lord by this time he stinketh. Jesus, saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?*—John xi. 25, 26. 39, 40.

JESUS is also our resurrection and life, and will be our life even in death, our eternal life, for with him we have passed from death unto life, and shall in the midst of death be encompassed with eternal life. But he also asketh us, "Believest thou this?" Yes, Lord Jesus, I believe, but help thou mine unbelief. Martha also believed, but her faith failed her at last, and she said, "Lord, by this time he stinketh." We must therefore persevere in faith, and though we should see nothing before us but our corruption and misery, and see no way of extricating ourselves out of the distress we are in, yet if we firmly believe, the Lord will not fail to help us and ours; we shall see his glory; for he relieves the distressed, and the greater their distress and misery is, the more will the glory of God, his Almighty power, wisdom, and goodness, be manifested and praised.

Corruption, earth and worms,
Shall but refine this flesh;
Till my triumphant spirit comes
To put it on afresh.



If any man serve me, let him follow me, &c. If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, &c. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world and lose himself, or be cast away?—John xii. 26. Luke ix. 23—25. See Matt. xvi. 24—26.

THE following of Christ, and self-denial, are so often inculcated in the four gospels, that they are become indispensably necessary. He therefore who would be a faithful servant of Christ, must follow him in a holy life, in patient suffering, in denial of himself and of the world, and take his cross upon him daily. The taking it up daily, renders it easy; if it be omitted a single day, it will grow more difficult. Christ, says Arndt, has many servants, but few followers. They desire to be excused from the cross of Christ, or at least refuse daily to crucify their lusts and desires, but still indulge themselves in some worldly pursuit, while in the mean time they lose their souls. But in order to make the following of Christ a genuine and lasting work, it should proceed from faith. We must first receive Christ in faith, as our sacrifice of atonement; then shall we receive him as our example, and willingly follow and serve him; since, as he tells us, where he is, there shall also his servants be; and his Father will honour us.

I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,
Or to defend his cause:
Maintain the honour of his word,
The glory of his cross.



If we have the light of revelation, and after it, we act very unfaithfully. Darl soon come upon us, and the word shall condemn us on the last day. So that not sport with the word of God. We in earnest and follow it, else it will be ta us as it was from the Jews. Every wo we know and do not follow, will be a ness against us. O how necessary is obedient and faithful to the word. infidelity proceeds nothing but darkn great comfort is here proposed to the He who believes in Christ, whatever and darkness he may feel, shall not on livered from the darkness, but shall be ly enlightened, shall know God, as Jesus tells him, that he is not come to to save the world, and this he says ev enemies.



He that is washed, needeth not, save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean. Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done unto you.—John xiii. 10. 15. xv. 3.

PETER refused to have his feet washed by Jesus. But "Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me;" upon which he offered his hands, feet, and head to be washed: "Jesus saith unto him, He that is washed, needeth not," &c. If we believe in Jesus, and are washed by his blood for the justification and remission of sins, we are clean every whit; for the blood of the Son of God cleanseth us from all sins. So that we neither need, nor can be cleaner. We should daily wash our feet, that is, purify our walk and conversation, and follow Christ more sincerely; for it is for this purpose, that he hath given us an example, especially of love and humility, that we should do to our neighbour as he did to us. Now if we believe the words of Christ, we are clean every whit, white and pure without blemish. And the more we consider ourselves, after justification, as justified, pure, and unblemished, and the more peace we enjoy, the more able and willing shall we be, after our sanctification, to keep ourselves clean.

Now to the Lord that makes us know
The wonders of his dying love,
Be humble honours paid below,
And strains of noble praise above.

And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.—John xiv. 13, 14. xvi. 23, 24.

So often does Christ repeat the assurance, that he will do whatsoever we shall ask in his name. We should therefore pray only in the name of Christ, trusting to his merits and intercession, and not appear before God without him, our Mediator, which the disciples had not yet done, for they did not yet understand his mediatorial office. If we pray in the name of Christ, he will do it himself, that the father may be glorified in the Son. As the Father's glory is dear to him, he will certainly do what we ask. And then the Father will give us all we ask; for Jesus here affirms it solemnly and repeatedly, and says, chap. xvi. 27. that the Father himself loveth us; and therefore he will give us all things, at his intercession. This may and ought to excite us to faithful prayer.

Lift up your eyes to th' heavenly seats
Where your Redeemer stays;
Kind Intercessor, there he sits,
And loves, and pleads, and prays.

Petitions now and praise may rise,
And saints their offerings bring;
The Priest with his own sacrifice
Presents them to the king.



These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. I pray not, that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. And I have declared unto them thy name, &c.—John xvi. 33. xvii. 15, 16. 26.

THE world is filled with disturbance and tribulation, but in Jesus we shall have peace. Hence he speaks none but words of peace to us, that in him we might have and keep peace. And whenever the world troubles us, he says, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world;" and therefore the prince of this world. So that the world and Satan will not be able to take our peace from us, for they are vanquished enemies. And that we may have the greater comfort, he prays for us, that God would preserve us from evil in the world, that we may not be of the world, not have a worldly mind, nor let the glory and love of the world captivate us. For in the knowledge of him we have that which is much more valuable, eternal life; and the love of the Father towards his Son, and the Son himself, will be in us. O how great a love! O how transcendant a glory!

Come, we that love the Lord,
And let our joys be known;
Join in a song with sweet accord,
And thus surround the throne.

The sorrows of the mind
Be banished from the place,
Religion never was design'd
To make our pleasures less.

Where they crucified him, and two others with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.—John xix. 18. On the cross he said to his mother ver. 26. 28. *Woman, behold thy son;* and to John, *Behold thy mother.* And ver. 28. *I thirst.* And ver. 30. *It is finished; and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.*

My Saviour, it is written of thee, "He was reckoned among the transgressors," which was particularly fulfilled on the cross. But we are all transgressors, and thou art in the midst of us sinners, to impart to us the blessing of thy cross, and save us, however great our evil deeds are. Thou didst provide on the cross for our bodily welfare, support, and refreshment, as thou didst for that of thy mother. So that every bodily enjoyment is a blessing derived from thy cross. O let us in the midst of our temporal enjoyments think upon thy cross, and use all those things with holy fear and thankfulness. Thou wast on the cross like a dry potsherd, faint and thirsty, then they gave thee vinegar and gall to drink. But thou didst here expiate our sinful thirst, that we might not perish for ever. Thou didst thirst after our salvation, O let us thirst for thee, and be refreshed by thee at the hour of death. And as thou hast fulfilled all that was necessary, for our reconciliation, grant that we may rest, in life and death, only in thy full and perfect sacrifice for us, and after having discharged all our duty in life, may we be able to say in death, "It is finished."



Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not, (do not stay with me,) *for I am not yet ascended to my father* (thou wilt see me again,) *but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.*—John xx. 15—17.

THIS Mary was perhaps the most afflicted, and the person who loved our Saviour best, and longed most for him; whence he made his first appearance to her. He still regards the penitent soul, who seeks him with tears, calls her by name, as he did Mary, and will certainly appear to her with comfort and help. Jesus being willing to comfort the other afflicted disciples, would not suffer Mary to tarry long with him, but ordered her to hasten away, and acquaint them with his resurrection; and that they were henceforth to consider his Father to whom he ascended, as their Father, and his God as their God, and so themselves as his brethren. The same word of comfort he delivers to us, who believe on him.

To Jesus let our praises rise,
Who gave himself a sacrifice;
Now he appears before his God,
And for our pardon, pleads his blood.

Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord, and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.—John xx. 27—29.

THOMAS would not believe without seeing the print of the nails; yet Jesus had compassion on his weakness, and showed him the print of the nails, and the wound in his side. This convinced him, and he cried out, My Lord and my God! Thus God often takes an extraordinary step to bring those who are very infirm to believe in him; for he will suffer none to continue in unbelief, who do not wantonly resist him; but it is most usual to believe the word, without first seeing and feeling. Hence Jesus saith, "Blessed are they which have not seen, and yet have believed." Faith is conversant with things invisible, and the believer adheres to the word, and appeals to it before God. Though he has not yet seen or felt what is there promised, but the contrary.

Not with our mortal eyes
Have we beheld the Lord;
Yet we rejoice to hear his name,
And love him in his word.



He saith unto him the third time, Simon son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved, because he said unto him the third time, lovest thou me? and he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, &c.—John xxi. 17—19.

Jesus here examines Peter closely, and asks him thrice whether he loved him; and as Peter answered in the affirmative, the reply was "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep," &c. How few candidates are qualified for such an examination! Whoever doth not love Christ, the chief Shepherd, is not fit to be a shepherd of souls, for, like an hireling, he will seek only his own honour and advantage, not how to feed the sheep. Yet a blind Pharisee thinks himself fit for this examination; he imagines he loves God and Jesus, and yet he loves neither his faithful shepherds, nor the sheep, nor is a sheep himself, and how can he be a true shepherd? he is an offensive goat. It is the property of true pastors to love, to feed, and suffer; ever to deny their own will, and entirely to submit themselves to the discipline of their divine Master. Whilst they were young, they were more at liberty; but in their advanced years they must conform themselves to suffering, and, like Peter, be carried whither they would not. But their comfort is, that through their sufferings, and through their death, God will be glorified, and every thing will turn out to their salvation.

Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent.—Acts ii. 36—38.

PETER reproaches the Jews with having crucified Jesus, though by the hands of heathens, and they were pricked to the heart, and being deeply affected, they asked, What shall we do? and Peter said, Repent, change your mind. Now in order to our entering upon true repentance, we must consider ourselves as having crucified Jesus by our sins; this must penetrate and affect our hearts. But we must not let it rest with a pious notion and resolution, but actually proceed to repentance, and a true change of heart; for these Jews were affected, yet Peter said unto them, "Repent;" a good motion and good resolution not being a complete repentance and change of heart. Many are moved, without proceeding to true repentance.

How sad our state by nature is;
Our sin, how deep its stains!
And Satan binds our captive minds
Fast in his slavish chains.

To the dear fountain of thy blood,
Incarnate God, I fly:
Here let me wash my spotted soul,
From crimes of deepest dye.



Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.—Acts iii. 19. iv. 12.

How frequently do Peter, the other apostles, and Jesus himself exhort to repentance! It is therefore indispensably necessary. It consists in coming to Jesus with a penitent and broken heart, and applying in faith for salvation, remission of sins, life and happiness, only in his name and through his blood. For without this name, there is no help, no salvation, and all the prophets gave witness to this Jesus, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins, (chap. x. 43.) and whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved (chap. ii. 21.) We shall infalliably be saved and refreshed, if we repent. This should recommend repentance to us, and allure and invite us to it; for who would not desire to be saved, refreshed, and blessed. Now true repentance is called a blessing (chap. iii. 26.) It is therefore necessary, since without it we are under a curse. And it is possible, for according to chap. v. 31. Jesus was exalted for this purpose, to give us repentance. As surely as he is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour in heaven, he will give us true repentance.

See here an endless ocean flows
Of never-failing grace,
Behold a dying Saviour's veins,
That sacred flood increase.

For behold, he prayeth—Acts ix. 11.—Thus Paul prayed when he was converted. And of Cornelius the centurion we read, chap. x. 2. 4. that he was *a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, and gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.* And an angel of God was sent to tell him, *Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.*

ANNANIAS was afraid to go to Saul, but Jesus said, "Behold he prayeth;" he is now reformed, a very different man, thou hast nothing to fear. When men are truly converted, they pray, and that earnestly, not content with a cold morning and evening prayer, but throughout the day frequently pour out their hearts before God. The wants of their souls teach them to pray. So that the true prayer of the heart begins with true conversion, and such prayer gives solidity to the conversion, and ends in newness of life. This was the case of Cornelius. It is said that he prayed to God alway: he did not formally read a morning and evening prayer out of a book. Now if we pray thus earnestly and importunately, and firmly depend on Christ, our prayer shall come up for a memorial before God; for all our sighs are recorded in his book, and he will suffer none of them to be forgotten or unheard.

How will the powers of darkness boast,
If but one praying soul be lost!
But I have trusted in thy grace,
And shall again behold thy face.



Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him. They persevered in prayer, says Luther, they did not cease. Acts xii. 5. Then came an angel and led him out. And the gate (ver. 10.) *opened to them of its own accord, and they went out.* And when the angel left him (ver. 12.) Peter came to a house, *where many were gathered together, praying.*

THUS God delivered Peter out of the hands of Herod, at the incessant prayer of the church, when he had been thrown into prison. But Herod was smitten when the people shouted, and he gave not God the glory, and he was eaten of worms. But the word of God grew and multiplied. Then might be applied what is said, Matt. ii. 20. "They are dead which sought the young child's life." How great is the power of prayer; especially of incessant prayer offered up by many gathered together. The angel of the Lord will also succour us, though invisible, and every door that is shut shall be opened at our prayer, that is, all obstacles shall be removed, they shall rather forward our course, and all proud enemies shall be put to confusion. O that proud men would take warning from Herod! O that family and public prayer were more attended! as we read of St. Paul, chap. xx. 36, and again xxi. 5, that he kneeled down, and prayed with them all, and once on the shore, in public. But to many this sort of prayer is a strange thing.

Be thou my sun, and thou my shield,
My soul in safety keep;
Make haste, before mine eyes are seal'd
In death's eternal sleep.

And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men that he hath raised him from the dead.—Acts xvii. 30, 31.

HERE repentance is again enjoined, for three reasons: First, because since the coming of Christ, and the preaching of his gospel, men have not the excuse of ignorance; consequently their guilt is the greater, if they continue impenitent. The coming and the merits of Christ do not give them license to sin, but oblige them more strongly to repentance. Secondly, God will judge the world by Christ, therefore he commandeth all men everywhere to repent; for all men shall appear before his judgment seat; all who would there be acquitted, must repent, leave off sin, and come to Christ, that he may not judge them. O, sinner, how wilt thou fare without repentance, before this just and impartial tribunal? No excuse, no rank will here avail, but every one shall receive according to his doings. Thirdly, God hath raised Christ from the dead, and will give and excite faith by his Spirit, and thus himself bring men to repentance and true conversion; as we read chap. v. 31, that Christ was therefore exalted to give repentance and forgiveness of sins. Thus the passion and resurrection of Christ were not designed to make us secure, but penitent, and to make our repentance possible. Lord, save us!



Testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.—Acts xx. 21. 26. 28.

As Paul so strongly insisted on faith and repentance, a faithful teacher will do the same, and not regard those who say, he can preach nothing else. He will rather wish he could do it effectually. He will also endeavour so to conduct himself in his office, as to be pure from the blood of all men. He first takes heed to himself, and then to the church, as bishop or overseer, and considers the church as purchased with the blood of Christ. He will not therefore suffer a single soul to perish through his fault; for in that case Christ would not only require the blood of the neglected soul, but his own blood too at his hands. Let us pray for faithful shepherds.

Thy threat'nings wake my slumb'ring eyes,
And warn me where my danger lies;
But 'tis thy blessed gospel, Lord,
That makes my guilty conscience clean,
Converts my soul, subdues my sin,
And gives a free but large reward.

I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember that by the space of three years, I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.—Acts xx. 29. 31. 33.

HERE is room for every teacher, every father of a family, and every Christian, to try and humble himself, when he reflects on the zeal, diligence, tears, and disinterestedness of St. Paul. But hirelings came soon after the apostle's departing, who sought their own, nay grievous wolves, even in this favoured city of Ephesus; teachers who taught perverse doctrine, in order to draw to themselves disciples, or much popularity. This always was and still is the case. Even the best seminaries may produce grievous wolves, who only study to gain applause, ridicule other teachers, and resist the truth, whilst they pretend, that they are contesting for it. And if such men are followed, it is a dreadful spiritual judgment. However the faithful teachers should not be discouraged, but be the more faithful on their part, in labour and prayer; for when their enemies come to extremities, they shall, according to 1 Timothy i. 9. "proceed no further, for their folly shall be manifest unto all men."

Let Zion's watchmen all awake,
And take the alarm they give;
Now let them from the mouth of God,
Their awful charge receive.



Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men. Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day.—Acts xxiv. 16. xxvi. 22.

MEN who are not yet acquainted with their evil heart imagine that they have a good conscience; but no one has this by nature. Their conscience is only asleep and insensible, which is dangerous, for, as Luther says, God makes first an evil conscience, and then a good one; that is, we must first feel our sins, our inward corruption and evil conscience, and lay hold of the blood of Christ with a sorrowful penitent heart, and then we shall be rid of our evil conscience. After this we must keep our conscience void of offence toward God and toward men, so that we may walk innocently before God in the blood of Christ, and with a good and cheerful conscience before men, and be able to face them with confidence. In this condition we may have it in our power, notwithstanding any ill treatment we meet with, to say, "Having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day." And thus all events will work together for our salvation, and God will be glorified in us, whether it be by life or by death.

O blessed souls are they
Whose sins are cover'd o'er,
Divinely blest, to whom the Lord
Imputes their guilt no more.

Delivering thee from the people, and from the
tiles, unto whom now I send thee. To open
eyes, and to turn them from darkness to ligh
from the power of Satan unto God, that the
receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance a
them that are sanctified by faith that is in
Acts xxvi. 17, 18.

THE whole ministerial office tends to turn from darkness to light, and from the power c tan to God; the minister should therefore self be first enlightened, converted, and free the power of Satan, else he cannot rightly en a true conversion, nor earnestly endeavour to them from the snares of Satan, whilst he hir continues ensnared, perhaps by avarice or a tion. Being unenlightened himself, he will take many for converted, who are not so, them improper advice, and prove a false c forter. But let every one look to himself; i desires remission of sins and inheritance am them which are sanctified, he must be conve and sanctified by faith. So that true faith aff holiness. Without it there is neither remis nor inheritance. For the inheritance is ca (Col. i. 11.) the inheritance of the saints in li We must walk in the light, and follow after l ness. The Lord himself will assist us in t that we may turn to God, and do works r for repentance.

Go preach my gospel, saith the Lord,
Let the whole earth my grace receive!
He shall be saved that trusts my word,
He shall be damn'd who won't believe.



gospel of Christ is the power of God unto sal-
tion, to every one that believeth, to the Jew first,
nd also to the Greek. But the companion of
ith is repentance, whence we read, that *The good-*
ss of God leadeth to repentance. For he is not
Jew which is one outwardly.—Rom. i. 16. ii. 4.
, &c.

REACHER may hinder the faith of his hearers,
thus hinder the power of the gospel, by a
manner of recommending it, and by an of-
ive life. But every man obstructs the faith
imself by impenitence; for faith is wrought
in repentance or a change of mind; so that
nust not grow secure under the long-suffering
lness of God, but suffer it to lead us to re-
ance. But this must be hearty repentance.
as he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly
ircumcision, so he is not a Christian who is
only outwardly; but he who is one inwardly
by virtue of his faith hath circumcised and
ged his heart. The Jews could not do this
use of their specious outward show, nor the
ks because of their pretended wisdom, of
h we read, chap. i. 22, that "professing
iselves to be wise they became fools," which
ens to this very day. Grant, therefore, Lord,
we may humble ourselves, acknowledge our
and evil heart; and so circumcise and change
iat we may experience thy gospel to be the
er of God unto salvation.

The volume of my father's grace,
Does all my grief assuage;
Here I behold my Saviour's face
In almost every page.

There is none thath doeth good, no not one. Where is boasting, then? It is excluded. Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law. Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord will not impute sin. In the 32nd Psalm are moreover these words, *In whose spirit there is no guile.*—Rom. iii. 12. 27, 28. iv. 7, 8.

By nature there is none that can do good, real good works. Therefore St. Paul rightly draws the conclusion, that we are justified by faith alone, without the deeds of the law, as we believe in him who justifies the ungodly. For such we all are in the sight of God; it is he that makes us truly penitent, righteous, and good. Whosoever therefore would be saved, must consider himself as wicked by nature, impute the guilt of every sin to himself before God, stop his mouth, pray for grace, and for a spirit in whom is no guile, who reserves no sins to himself, and he must plead the merits of Jesus before God, and not his own merits; then shall this faith be imputed to him as righteousness, all his sins shall be forgiven, covered, and none of them imputed to him; nay, in Christ he will be accounted as righteous as his Saviour himself. O glorious comforts! O blessed salvation!

Vain are the hopes the sons of men
On their own works have built;
Their hearts by nature all unclean,
And all their actions guilt.



I have made thee a father of many nations, before him whom he believed, even God who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things, which be not, as though they were; who, against hope believed in hope; and being not weak in faith, he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded, that what he had promised he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.—Rom. iv. 17—22.

How great is the efficacy of faith! God imputes to it all righteousness, and confers upon it all salvation. And this we read immediately after, was written for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe, &c. O my God, grant unto us this faith of Abraham, that we also may believe, that thou quickenest the dead, and callest those things which be not, as though they were. Grant therefore that we may not so dwell on our spiritual deadness as to despair; and if thy help be delayed, let us not grow weak in faith, but strong, and tarry, as Abraham was under a necessity of tarrying. And suffer us not to stagger at thy promise through unbelief, but grant us to be fully persuaded that thou wilt fulfil that which thou hast promised.

Let Jew and Gentile stop their mouths,
Without a murmuring word:
And the whole race of creatures stand,
Condemn'd before the Lord.

We glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. —Rom. v. 3—5.

We should therefore not dread tribulation as an evil, but glory in it as salutary; for tribulation worketh patience. We are then doing the will of God, and a patient man is better than a strong man. A man, who has not experienced tribulation, is not yet broken, and is therefore impatient; but tribulation bends him, and gives him patience. This patience worketh experience; for if we are patient, we shall be succoured; God will fight for us, and we shall experience his miraculous aid and assistance, if we do not through impatience look for aid from ourselves or others. This experience worketh hope. As the Lord hath heard, delivered, and succoured us so often, we hope he will deliver us hereafter. And this hope, like a strong anchor, will not suffer us to fall or to be ashamed. This faith shall not sink or grow weak, but it shall grow strong; and amidst this tribulation, the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. We receive him in a figure at baptism, and again in the penitent renewal of our baptismal covenant, and he is our best comforter in affliction, when he sheds the love of God abroad in our hearts, which shall refresh us in trouble and in death.

Faith is the brightest evidence
 Of things beyond our sight:
Breaks through the clouds of flesh and sense,
 And dwells in heavenly light.



Know ye not, that so many as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism unto death: that like as Christ was raised up, &c.—Rom. vi. 3, 4.

St. Paul says, chap. v. 20. "Where sin abounded," that is, where the power of it was penitently discerned through the law, "grace did much more abound." Now as some might have misunderstood this, and have asked, Are we then to continue in sin, that grace may the more abound? he answers (ver. 2.) How shall we that are dead to sin (in baptism) live any longer therein?" Hence he says, "Know ye not," &c. So that being baptized into the death of Christ, and dead unto sin, the death of Christ is imputed to us, and every Christian is considered as having already suffered death for his sins. Nay, we are by baptism buried into the death of Christ. Now, as one who is dead and buried cannot again be put to death, so the sins of a Christian will not subject him to eternal death, he being dead unto sin in Christ. But we are, moreover, so baptized into the death of Christ on the cross, that according to ver. 6. the body of sin, the old man, is crucified and destroyed, that as Christ was raised up, so we also might walk in newness of life. And thus we are so very dead unto sin, that no sin can condemn or have dominion over us.

No more let sin and Satan reign,
Over our mortal flesh again:
The various lusts we seiz'd before,
Shall have dominion now no more.

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. Therefore we are debtors, not to the flesh, &c.—Rom. vii. 4. viii. 12.

A CARNAL mind is general among the unconverted in all regions. They agree in one point, in believing that they shall be saved, notwithstanding their continuing to *live* after the flesh. But they who are truly converted to Christ, are no longer carnally minded, are no longer debtors to live after the flesh, and by their carnal lusts to bring forth fruit unto death; for whoso liveth after the flesh incurs eternal death. No, the faithful are no longer under the law, which is always exciting sinful lusts, without destroying them. They are dead unto the law, through the body of Christ; that as Christ died unto the law, so they might likewise, and be no longer subject to the condemnation of it. For the most severe law cannot condemn any one to death who is dead already. But being free from the law, they are married to Christ, enjoy his favour, and obtain power, through his resurrection, to yield fruit unto God, to mortify the sinful lusts of the flesh, so that no sin may have dominion over them.

Backward with humble shame we look
On our original;
How is our nature dash'd and broke
In our first father's fall.

Wild and unwholesome as the root,
Will all the branches be;
How can we hope for living fruit
From such a deadly tree?



Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, &c.—Rom. viii. 15, 16. 26.

UNDER the old covenant the spirit of fear prevailed, even among the faithful; but under the new, the faithful have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, like those under the old covenant. No, they have received a filial spirit, by which they cry, Abba, Father; and that even when they are suffering, as the Son of God did on the mount of Olives; for it is the Spirit of his Son. To you then, being children, hath God sent the Spirit of his Son, who crieth, Abba, Father. The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God, and that, partly by a particular joy and comfort in distress, partly by proposing to us the true marks of our adoption. This Spirit also assists our infirmities, especially in prayer, when we know not of ourselves how to pray, he intercedes for us with groanings not to be uttered, according to the pleasure of God, that we may truly pray according to the will of God, and this prayer, produced by the Holy Spirit, will infallibly be heard.

Why should the children of a king,
Go mourning all their days?
Great Comforter, descend and bring
Some tokens of thy grace.



They being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness (and being therefore not righteous,) *have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness. Whosoever believeth on him, shall not be ashamed. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.*—Rom. x. 3. 10, 11. xi. 32.

OBSERVE, says Luther, this most important text, which condemns all works of human righteousness, and proposes faith as the only means of obtaining the mercy of God. Both the heathens and the unconverted, especially some grave and specious Christians, have much righteousness of their own, which proves their hindrance in faith, and in the righteousness of Christ; for though they imagine themselves to be relying upon it in faith, it is only imagination, since in fact they rely upon this or that, upon external worships, alms, and the like. And though some of them be wicked, they look upon others as worse, and still depend upon a righteousness of their own. Now he who desires to be justified and saved by faith in Christ, must, with a truly penitent and contrite heart, consider himself as unrighteous and wicked, be divested of all his own righteousness, hunger and thirst after the righteousness of Christ, be covered with it in faith, call upon the name of the Lord, and depend upon the mercy of God alone; so will he be justified, saved, and not put to shame.



Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another: Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord: rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer. Bless them which persecute you: mind not high things, &c. Be not wise in your own conceits. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Owe no man any thing, &c. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour.—Rom. xii. 10—12. 14. 16. 18. xiii. 8. 10.

THE apostle having in the former chapter proposed the doctrine and the value of faith, now exhorts to every kind of duty. So that man must be converted, and experience the mercy of God in faith, before he can properly discharge his duty; else it is all a mere specious external appearance. All these duties spring from love, which is the fulfilling of the law. This love cannot be fully discharged by works or alms, for we are still indebted to every man, and bound to shew kindness to him, as much as to ourselves. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, but every sort of good, and grows not weary or faint. It extends even to enemies, and blesses them that persecute; it is not elated, nor minds high things, but condescends to men of low estate, to the poor, and seeks to live peaceably with all men; and as we may very easily deviate from the duties of love, we are taught to continue instant in prayer; for in prayer we adhere to him, who is love itself, and so continue to love.

Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For none of us liveth to himself, &c. Whether we live, we live unto the Lord, &c. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let not then your good be evil spoken of. For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.—Rom. xiv. 1. 7. 8. 12. 16, 17.

WEAK Christians make a conscience of eating this and that, and the strong were not sufficiently tender, and thus one judged the other. Hence St. Paul says (ver. 4.) "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?" Every one lived and served, as a servant of Christ, his Lord, and what he did he did it unto the Lord, whether he ate any thing or not. Every one was to give account of himself, not of another. They were not, therefore, to corrupt their good, so as to let it be evil spoken of; for the kingdom of God consisted not in meat and drink, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. And in this respect we also are bound to serve Christ, and to lead a truly evangelical Christian life; so shall we please God, and be useful to men, whereas by uncharitable judgment we displease God, and hurt one another.

Not different food, or different dress,
Compose the kingdom of our Lord;
But peace, and joy, and righteousness,
Faith, and obedience to his word.

When weaker Christians we despise,
We do the gospel mighty wrong;
For God the gracious, and the wise,
Receives the feeble with the strong.



Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning; that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. Now the God of patience and consolation grant ye to be like-minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus. The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.—Rom. xv. 4, 5. 13. see also xvi. 20.

We are to consider the whole scripture as a letter addressed to us; for it is no longer of use to those to whom it was written, but it is to us. And if we have patience, we shall derive from the scriptures every comfort and hope. God himself is here called the God of patience and consolation, he has proved himself to be so by deed, and will have patience with us, and comfort us. We should also be distinguished as men of patience and consolation, bear with and comfort other men, and so be of one mind, or unanimous, yet according to Christ, for any other unanimity will profit nothing. God is also called a God of hope, and we shall, through the power of the Holy Ghost, have hope, strong hope, which will fill our minds with confidence, peace, and joy. Lord, grant that we may experience all this, and depart in thee with the full hope of everlasting life.

God, who in various methods told
His mind and will to saints of old,
Sent to his Son with truth and grace,
To teach us in these latter days.

God is faithful, by whom ye were called to the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall also confirm you to the end, &c.—1 Cor. i. 9. 7, 8.

THE faithfulness of God is the foundation of all these assurances, that we shall come behind in no gift, be confirmed unto the end, and blameless on the great day; for "God is faithful." He is that faithful God, who keepeth his promise for ever. His faithfulness is as great as himself, and it is impossible for him to lie, or to suffer his word to be unaccomplished, for sooner shall heaven and earth pass away. He has promised (Jer. xxxi. 14.) to satisfy his people with his goodness. He is faithful, and will fulfil it! we shall not lack any necessary gift; for, according to ver. 20, he hath made his Son to us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. He will also confirm us unto the end, and present us before him blameless on the great day; for he hath promised it; and being faithful, he will fulfil it. He himself hath called us to the fellowship of his Son, and therefore will keep us in that fellowship, and prepare, strengthen, and ground us in it, agreeably to his promise.

Great is the Lord, his works of might,
Demand our noblest songs;
Let his assembled saints unite
Their harmony of tongues.

Great is the mercy of the Lord,
He gives his children food;
And, ever mindful of his word,
He makes his promise good.



But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned; for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. We are fools for Christ's sake.—1 Cor. ii. 14. iii. 19. iv. 10.

THE apostles appeared foolish to all natural men, as they do to this day, for suffering thirst, hunger, and blows, and being a curse and laughing-stock to the world. The merely natural men, especially the wise men of the world, still think the faithful fools, for suffering and enduring all things, for they neither perceive nor understand the things of the Spirit of God. Christ crucified, the method of salvation, and the imitation of a suffering Saviour, are all foolishness and offence to them, however learned they may be, and however seemingly zealous for the pure doctrine; for he that would truly know Christ, and walk in the right road to salvation, must confess his folly, blindness, and total impotency, since by nature he cannot perceive or understand any thing truly, concerning the Spirit of God; he must humble himself, and pray for the Holy Spirit, else he cannot call Jesus Lord, all his wisdom is foolishness with God, and God will surprise him in his folly.

Our reason stretches all its wings,
And climbs above the skies;
But still how far beneath thy feet,
Our grovelling reason lies.

Purge out, therefore, the old leaven, &c. All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. Know ye not, that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price, &c. The time is short, &c.—1 Cor. v. 7. vi. 12. 19. vii. 29.

At the eating of the passover, every corner was cleansed from the leaven; he therefore who will enjoy Christ, the true passover, must be enabled to cleanse himself from the leaven of sin, from every uncleanness, and from all impure desires, which some Corinthians indulged; and even from all undue attachment to worldly matters, as not to engage in needless law-suits, neither to be captivated by temporal things, as some Corinthians were. We should always consider, that the time is short, that we must possess all things as though we did not possess them. We should, in particular, remember, that we are not in the least our own, but are bought with a price, and therefore have no right to do what we please, but what our Lord pleases, that we may praise him in body and soul, both being his gift. We ought, therefore, to apply only to his use all our powers of body and soul, and live unto him and serve him alone, as being living sacrifices appropriated to his glory.

Great God, what poor returns we pay
For love so infinite as thine!
Words are but air, and tongues but clay;
But thy compassion's all divine.

I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air. But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they lusted (of whom it is written,) *The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.*—1 Cor. ix. 26, 27. x. 6, 7,

CHRISTIANS should abstain from all that may hinder them in their race and combat, since they are to obtain an incorruptible crown. St. Paul proposes himself as an example, saying, that he fights not at random, or beats the air, but keeps his body in subjection, &c. All teachers of every kind, and heads of families, should observe this, lest they should preach to others, and be themselves castaways. If in their combat they do not hit the old Adam, nor mortify his lusts, they only beat the air, however learned or zealous they may seem to be for the truth. Let none of us lust after evil things, as the Israelites did, lest we incur their punishment. But do not we sit down at our feasts to eat and drink to excess, and rise up to play, to visit plays and operas, to skip and dance; and all this in these evil times, to extinguish the little remaining good. But God has turned the sport of many into sorrow.

Though the dear path to thine abode,
Lies through this horrid land:
Lord, we would keep the heavenly road,
And run at thy command.

Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God (that is, neither to the wicked, nor to the good) *Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, &c. Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.*—1 Cor. x. 32, 33. xi. 1.

HERE again the apostle proposes himself as an example, both to teachers and private Christians. They are directed to give offence to no man, whether good or bad, and thereby to please all men. But how? No otherwise than by pleasing others in order to their edification, not by seeking their own ends, their own profit or advantages, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. That is a despicable complacency, which arises from self-love, and seeks only its own glory or benefit; of this St. Paul says Gal. i. 10. "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." Every teacher should imitate Christ, who sought only the salvation of men; then he may say, "Be ye followers of me," &c. But no unconverted preacher can say this; he doth not follow Christ, and he will weaken the doctrine of the imitation of Christ, by his conversation, insomuch that men will imagine it useless or impossible to follow Christ, since their teachers do not set the example.

The wealthy sinners he contemns,
Loves all that fear the Lord;
And tho' to his own hurt he swears,
Yet he will keep his word.



For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we shall not be condemned with the world.—1 Cor. xi. 30—32.

THE apostle, in cautioning them against receiving the Lord's supper unworthily, advises self-examination, and says (ver. 29.) "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself. Alas! how few consider this! They who go on impenitently, and without self-examination, incur damnation or judgment, and this judgment is partly founded in this, that instead of confirming themselves in the faith, which indeed they have not, they confirm themselves in security, and grow the worse for imagining that the Lord's supper will set them right again. I am of opinion, that the unworthy receiving of the Lord's supper is partly the cause of the decay of Christianity. We see the believing Corinthians were visited with judgments, some by sickness, others by death, on account of some disorders at the Lord's supper, We should therefore judge and accuse ourselves, that we may not be judged; and though a temporal judgment may befal us, yet we shall not be condemned with the world.

Break off my fetters, Lord, and show
Which is the path my feet should go:
If snares and foes beset the road,
I fly to hide me near my God.

No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. But covet earnestly the best gifts; and yet I shew unto you a more excellent way.—1 Cor. xii. 3, 4. 31.

THIS more excellent way is charity, which St. Paul describes, chap. xiii. Whoever reads that, and examines himself, will humble himself, and attend to the apostle's advice, chap. xiv. 1. "Follow after charity;" and xvi. 14. "Let all your things be done with charity." For when faith and hope shall cease, charity will remain, and is therefore the greatest. We should continue stedfast in charity, and manifest it particularly by not severely judging or despising other Christians, as members of the same body, but rather administering to edifying and reforming one another, not growing impatient or weary in case reformation should not follow immediately. For we read "charity suffereth long, beareth all things, hopeth all things, and never faileth." This charity is not to be attained, but by confessing Jesus to be our Lord by the Holy Ghost; so shall we not judge uncharitably of others, who have the Holy Ghost. Where the Holy Ghost resides, men will certainly follow charity. But they who are contentious, and despise the children of God, have not the Holy Ghost, nor faith, however learned they may be.

Raised by his Father to the throne,
Christ sent his promised Spirit down,
With gifts and grace for rebel men,
That God might dwell on earth again.



For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, &c. Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.—1 Cor. xv. 25. 58. xvi. 13.

If the faithful, or even the whole church, be so beset by enemies, as to be in apparent danger of being overpowered, yet they shall be delivered, for Christ must reign, till he hath finally put all enemies under his feet. His reign therefore still continues. He continues, like a warrior, to gird his sword upon his thigh, and to ride forth in defence of the truth, that his word and truth may not be subdued; and his wretched enemies are reduced to increase the glories of his sovereignty, by their mocking, scoffing, and persecution. His victory is ours, as we read, ver. 57. "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory." We should not, therefore, be afraid, or stagger, grow faint and weary, and imagine the undertaking too difficult for us. No, we should stand fast, and abound in the work of the Lord, labour, and pray more and more, forasmuch as we know that our labour is not in vain. Lord, grant that we may not be weary, but watch, and prevent the enemy from sowing his tares.

Let every creature rise and bring
Peculiar honours to our king;
Angels descend with songs again,
And earth repeat the loud Amen.

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort. Who comforteth us, &c. Who delivereth us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.—2 Cor. i. 3, 4. 10.

If there be neither mercy nor comfort any where else, it may be found with God; for, to our endless comfort, he is called and is the God of all comfort and mercy; who comforteth us not only in any particular, but in every tribulation, and it is then that we first know and experience him in faith to be our comforter; for tribulation should not weaken our faith, but our unbelief. God attacks the flesh by tribulation, unbelief is a work of the flesh. Now the more the flesh and the heart of unbelief is weakened, broken, humbled, and qualified for divine comfort, the more will God comfort us, and strengthen our faith, that we may administer the same comfort to others. Though our sufferings are many, yet we shall be abundantly comforted, and our measure will be exactly taken, so that nothing may exceed our powers. The Lord hath done this hitherto, and delivered us from distress; as he still delivers us, we have grounds to hope that he will continue to do it; for he hath promised, and all his promises are (ver. 20.) "yea and amen." God hath confirmed us in Christ, and sealed us with the Holy Spirit.

Firm as the earth thy gospel stands,
My Lord, my hope, my trust;
If I am found in Jesus' hands,
My soul can ne'er be lost.



Thanks be unto God, who always causeth us to triumph, &c. Such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed, &c.—2 Cor. ii. 14. iii. 4, 5. iv. 8, 9.

WHOEVER desires to be always victorious and blessed, must have been first enlightened (chap. iv. 6.) and qualified for it by God, as St. Paul here adds, "who hath also made us able ministers of the Spirit." He, therefore, who would duly exercise the ministry of the Spirit in all respects, must have the Holy Spirit; for without him we are not able even to think, much less to speak and act rightly, neither can we discharge any duty of the office faithfully. A preacher, without the Spirit, will often corrupt the word by misrepresenting or misapplying it; he will not "speak as of sincerity, as of God, in the sight of God," much less will he endure tribulation and persecution for the sake of Christ; for he wants the Spirit of faith, which will speak, in spite of persecution. How necessary, therefore is it, that all men should be enlightened and converted, and particularly preachers, for the sake of their office; for from that moment their qualification begins.

I can do all things, or can bear
All sufferings, if my Lord be there;
Sweet pleasures mingle with the pains,
While his left hand my head sustains.

But if the Lord be once withdrawn,
And we attempt to work alone,
When new temptations spring and rise,
We find how great our weakness is.



and house of God in heaven, must have
Spirit, and be regenerated by him; s
be born of spirit, so that every thing i
be new. Christ attests this by a solem
ed affirmation, in John iii. How can a
always remains the old carnal man, e
new heaven? Now we become new cr
Christ, when in true repentance we acl
ourselves to be the enemies of God, ar
apply to ourselves his atonement.
will give us comfort in affliction; for
not any thing visible, the object of it i
specious, nor any pleasing inward sens
the invisible God and his word; wl
written, that "we walk by faith, not
By virtue of this faith we are also w
gether with God for the salvation of o
so have not received the grace of Go
much less are employed with vain p

Ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance, &c.—2 Cor. vii. 9, 10.

How careful and anxious should every teacher be, that his hearers may not receive injury either by his preaching or conversation; for this may easily happen. St. Paul himself felt some anxiety of this sort, as he confesses (ver. 5.) "we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears; nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus," particularly when he acquainted him, that the Corinthians were made sorry after a godly manner by St. Paul's epistles; so that he rejoiced the more. Thus the apostle was troubled, and considered himself as one of those that were cast down, but God comforted him so, that he says (ver. 4.) "I am filled with comfort, I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation." Because he had learned that the Corinthians were truly penitent, and sorry after a godly manner. Now this godly sorrow is not only necessary in the beginning of repentance and conversion, but in our daily repentance! for it worketh contrition and amendment unto salvation. No man will repent of having been sorry for his sins; for he shall certainly be comforted; whilst a sorrow merely on worldly accounts injures both soul and body, and the end thereof is often death.

Alas, and did my Saviour bleed,
And did my Sovereign die?
Would he devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?

Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, &c. That now at this time your abundance might be a supply for their wants, &c. He which soweth abundantly, shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, not grudgingly nor of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver.—2 Cor. vii. 9. 14. ix. 6, 7.

JESUS, though he was rich, became poor for our sakes, that we through his poverty might be rich. His poverty, therefore, and want are meritorious, and we shall be blessed with every spiritual blessing from his heavenly treasures; for he is the same Lord, rich unto all them that call upon him. We should ponder this in faith, and thereby be constrained to communicate abundantly to the poor, that our abundance may be a supply to the wants of others, and that there may be an equality, as we read (ver. 15,) "He that had gathered much (of the manna) had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack." Nor should our alms be given grudgingly; but bestowed as a blessing, and we should be cheerful givers, since Jesus so willingly condescended to become poor for our sakes; and as God loveth a cheerful giver, he will return unto us a plentiful harvest both here below and in heaven, that we may abound in every gift. Thus the more we give, the more we shall receive, if influenced by the free grace of Christ.

Blessings for ever on the Lamb,
Who bore the curse for wretched men:
Let angels sound his sacred name,
And every creature say amen.



alous over you with a godly jealousy: for I espoused you to one husband, that I may et you a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve igh his subtilty, so your minds should be cor- id from the simplicity that is in Christ. 2 ri. 2, 3. *See also ver.* 4. 13, 14. where the and deceitful workers are mentioned.

inisters should, like St. Paul, be jealous godly jealousy, that they may present souls te virgins to Christ: and not content them- rith awakening them in some degree, and half christians, but such as give up, like , their whole hearts to the Lord Jesus, not commit fornications with the world. ıen these are truly converted, they should re to keep them in the service of Christ, t suffer them to be corrupted from the ity of the gospel. But how can this af- ıte jealousy exist, if the teacher be not him- verted to Christ, and love him? Such an nore likely to corrupt souls from their lty. Every Christian should also take himself, that he be not seduced by the old from the simplicity that is in Christ. nplicity consists in depending on Christ d not on men; in relying singly upon his ent, in continuing stedfast in the word prayer, and in considering all those as de- workers who attempt to seduce us from d of God to dark speculations, and to lead y from the narrow path, to lose sight of ıt object.

When I am weak, then am I strong, therefore (says the apostle in the preceding words,) *I take pleasure in infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Finally, brethren, farewell, &c.*— 2 Cor. xii. 10. 9. xiii. 11.

THESE are not sinful infirmities, of which we cannot boast, but inward and outward suffering, by which we are humbled, stript of our own power, made sensible of our weakness, and become partakers of the divine power; for by these words, says Luther, Christ comforts all who are weak and troubled, since he cannot show forth his power and comfort, unless we are weak and suffer. So that we need not be afraid of sufferings, or anxious lest we should be weakened by them. No, we shall be strengthened: for if, in our sufferings, our own power and strength should fail, so as to make us sensible of our weakness, the power of Christ will be mighty, or accomplished in us, and arrive at its purpose. We should then rely more firmly upon grace, and content ourselves therewith. By this means we shall at length rejoice, and be comforted, be of one mind, have peace, and experience the God of peace is ours, and, according to ver. 14, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost will be with us.

Had not the Lord, my rock, my help,
Sustained my fainting head,
My life had now in silence dwelt,
My soul among the dead.

'or I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster, &c. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, &c.—Gal. ii. 19, 20. iii. 24. 26—28.

ʏ faith in the gospel, as being the law of the pirit, we are, as Luther says, dead to the law, so ıat we are no longer indebted to it, need not ɔek our justification there, for it cannot curse, ɔndemn, or compel us: for Christ, in his death n the cross, died to the law, and we are crucified ith him, his death is imputed to us, so that to- ether with him we are crucified; his death on ıe cross is imputed to us, and we are together ith him dead to sin and to the law. But to what urpose? that we may live unto God, and serve im freely in the new service of the spirit. Hence ıe more we are freed from the law, the more ıall we live unto God: for Christ himself will ve in us, and we shall consider ourselves as in- ɛsted with Christ and his righteousness in bap- ism, so that no law can condemn us. And being ecome children of God, we shall have that filial illing spirit, which shall prompt us to live unto od, and to serve him freely, without the com- ulsion of the law.

Deep in the dust before thy throne,
Our guilt and our distress we own;
Great God, we own th' unhappy name,
Whence sprung our nature and our shame.

But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Against such there is no law. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, &c.—Gal. v. 18. 23. vi. 15, 16.

THE apostle had before exhorted us to walk in the Spirit, and not to fulfil the lusts of the flesh. Now if we are so led and prompted by the Spirit, that though the flesh should lust against the spirit yet it cannot prevail, then we are no longer under the law, so as to be cursed or compelled by it. In ver. 22, St. Paul enumerates the fruits of the Spirit, "love, joy, peace, long-suffering," &c., and adds, "against which there is no law;" it cannot condemn us, though these fruits should still be imperfect, provided we are enabled to manifest ourselves new creatures, by a change and reformation of our hearts, without which nothing external will avail us. But if we walk after this rule of the new creature, and become true Israelites, or champions, we shall infallibly have peace and mercy, and not else. How necessary it is for us to possess the real new birth, a change and conversion of the heart, and to walk in the spirit always!

What different powers of grace and sin
Attend our mortal state!
I hate the thoughts that work within,
And do the works I hate.

Thus will the flesh and spirit strive,
And vex and break my peace;
But I shall quit this mortal life,
And sin for ever cease.



I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation, &c.—Eph. i. 16. 18.

THE apostle had said before of the Ephesians, and consequently of us, if we believe, that God had abundantly blessed us with all spiritual blessings, &c., having made us accepted in the beloved, that is, in Christ, "to the praise of the glory of his grace;" and that "after we believed he sealed us with the Holy Spirit, which is the earnest of our inheritance," so that our blessed inheritance is insured to us by an epistle, a seal, and a pledge. And (chap. ii. 13, 14,) by the blood of Christ we are brought nigh, and need not, like slaves, stand afar off in fear, for he, Jesus himself, is our peace. How great is that peace which dissipates fear and doubt! since Jesus himself is our peace, and his Spirit our seal and pledge. Yet amidst these glorious blessings, the apostle prays that God would enlighten their eyes, and give them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. This shows, that we should daily improve in the knowledge of God, and pray to God for it: so shall we certainly be enlightened, however blind we may find ourselves, and we shall become better acquainted with our God as the Father of glory.

The men of grace have found
Glory begun below,
Celestial fruit on earthly ground,
From faith and hope may grow.

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened, &c.—Eph. iii. 14—16.—*read on to ver.* 21.

THIS is a prayer and a form fit to be used by ministers for their congregations, and by all Christians for themselves; it may be used as a daily prayer; we should offer it up in faith, and not think we ask too much. No, God will do exceedingly more for us than we can either ask or understand. Whatever we ask he will grant us still more; for though we are sinners, Jesus hath received gifts even for sinners, and to every one of us (ver. 7,) is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ, that we may enjoy all things richly, Christ being rich towards all them that call upon him. O God, thou art our Father, reconciled to us in Christ; grant us, therefore, power, according to the riches of thy glory, not according to the narrowness of our hearts. We stand in need of great power, for we have great enemies, strengthen us by thy Spirit in the inner man. Lord Jesus, do thou dwell in our hearts, and grant us to be rooted in thy love, that we may know it more and more, that it may be shed abroad in our hearts, and that we may be filled with all the fulness of God.

Come, dearest Lord, descend and dwell
By faith and love in every breast;
Then shall we know, and taste, and feel,
The joys that cannot be expressed.



But speaking the truth in love, we may grow up into him in all things, who is the head, even Christ. From whom the whole body maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love. Be ye therefore followers of God, &c.—Eph. iv. 15, 16. v. 1, 2.

THE apostle exhorts to unity and love, that we may grow up to Christ our head, edifying and improving each other, and all this in love; for love tends to improvement. We are to consider ourselves as members of one body, and administer to each other, by our life, conversation, and prayer: and to move us the more effectually to this, he says, "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children." How great love hath God manifested towards us, in sending us his Son, in loving, cherishing, and providing for us as his children! This should move us to give up ourselves to mutual offices of love, and to become like him; and instead of contending and quarrelling, to live and walk in love. The example of Christ should incite us to this, he having so loved us, that he gave himself for us, an offering to God, of a sweet-smelling savour. By the offering of Christ, which is a sweet-smelling savour before God, we and our prayers are become a sweet incense, dear and acceptable to God, and our hearts should also be disposed to mutual love towards each other.

Jesus, my Saviour, and my Judge,
Great all in all to me;
Shall I to saints their portion grudge,
Who owe my all to thee?

For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.—Eph. v. 30.

THE apostle had admonished both husbands and wives, the wives to be subject to their husbands, as the church is to Christ, and the husbands to love their wives, as Christ loves his church. They should therefore have the same mind in them, which was also in Christ Jesus; they should love their wives as their own bodies; for he that loves his wife, loves himself: since no man ever hated his own flesh. We learn from this particularly, how intimately the faithful are united with Christ, and beloved by him. He presents them to himself by his blood and Spirit, as a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle. Then are we cleansed in him and perfect after justification, and shall be more and more cleansed and sanctified by him. We are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones, and one spirit with him. Now as we do not hate the members of our own bodies, our own flesh, but love, support, and cherish them: so neither can Christ hate us as his flesh and bones, but will love, support, and cherish us; for in loving us, he loves himself also. Now if we have no doubt that we love our members, or that Christ loveth himself, we need not doubt that Christ will love us, though we be very frail members; for if any of our members are broken, we still love them, and rather take the more care of them, in order to heal them. O how intimate is this communion and bliss! If we understood it rightly, we might draw comfort from it in death.



Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.—Eph. vi. 8. 11. read on to ver. 18.

St. Paul had before admonished children and parents, masters and servants, and more especially the latter, not to serve their masters with eye service, but in simplicity of heart, and to remember, that they served the Lord, and would be rewarded by him, even as dutiful children would prosper, according to ver. 4. At last he comes to this conclusion, that whatsoever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord. Thus we are to do every thing unto the Lord, according to his will, and to look for our reward from him alone, consequently not to cease from doing good, though no man should know or reward it. If the devil, the flesh, and the world should attempt to hinder us, and we should feel ourselves weak, then we are to be strong in the Lord (ver. 10.) and in the power of his might, and entirely to despair of our own strength, but never of the power of God. We are to put on the whole armour of God, to cover and equip ourselves with it, that not the least part may remain uncovered, where the enemy may attack us; the righteousness of Christ is to be our breast-plate, faith our helmet, and the Spirit our sword, that thus armed we may have recourse to prayer in all our wants.

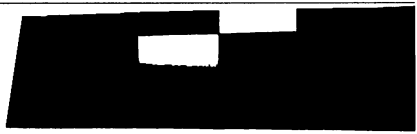
Arise my soul, my joyful powers,
And triumph in my God;
Awake my soul, and loud proclaim
His glorious grace abroad.

To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.—Phil. i. 21. iii. 7. read on to ver. 10.

BOTH passages show us the very heart of the apostle, what was his great object, his life, and what ought to be ours. Christ alone, with his perfect eternal righteousness, was his life, his inward eternal life. As Christ lived in him, and he in Christ, to die could not be but gain to him, because Christ was his life in the midst of death, and brought him through death to the full enjoyment of eternal life. Hence, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, he counted all his former advantages and his own righteousness as loss and dung, and this last he repeats thrice. We should therefore estimate all our own righteousness as loss and dung, be only solicitous to win Christ, and be found in him, that we may no longer derive our righteousness from the law; but possess that which we receive by faith, which is quite perfect, and entirely covers us; so that with it we may joyfully face death, and appear before the judgment of God. Then shall we have the power of his resurrection, and be enabled to say, as we read, chap. iv. 13. "I can do all things," &c.

Let the vain world pronounce it shame,
And fling their scandals on the cause;
We come to boast our Saviour's name,
And make our triumphs in his cross.

With joy we tell the scoffing age,
He that was dead has left his tomb;
He lives above their utmost rage,
And we are waiting till he come.



ily let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ, &c. That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, &c. For many walk, &c.—Phil. i. 27. ii. 15. iii. 18—20.

CHRISTIANS ought to shine as lights in the midst of a perverse world, as stars in the firmament, and to walk as the children of God, as becometh the gospel, without rebuke; and so much the more, as so many walk after the flesh, by which the apostle means, chiefly carnal teachers, whose God is their belly, who glory in their shame, who are earthly-minded, and therefore enemies of the cross of Christ, and seduce others from it, which the apostle observes with tears. The earthly-minded men of the present age, and their teachers, are still enemies of the cross of Christ, and when they mislead other men from the narrow path of the cross, and from following Christ, the faithful children and servants of God are moved to tears and prayers, and to say with St. Paul, Gal. v. 12. "I would they were even cut off who trouble you;" and with David, Psalm cxxix. 6. "Let them be as the grass upon the house tops, which withereth before it groweth up." God will hear this prayer, and fulfil what we read in 2 Tim. iii. 9.

Perpetual blessings from above
Encompass me around;
But O how few returns of love
Hath my Creator found.

What have I done for him that died
To save my wretched soul?
How are my follies multiplied,
Fast as my minutes roll!

Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. Which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, &c. Beware, lest any man spoil you through philosophy, &c.—Col. i. 12. 27. ii. 6—8.

If the inheritance be an inheritance of the saints in light, no man can attain to it without sanctification. But the faithful, when they are poor in spirit, should consider, how great things God hath already done for them, that they may be thankful to him, and strengthen themselves in the faith. He hath delivered them from the power of darkness, and translated them into the kingdom of his Son, in whom, (ver. 14.) they have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, and Christ himself is in them the hope of glory, that they may have in their hearts a firm hope of the inheritance in heaven; for Jesus, the Lord of that inheritance, is himself in them their hope. Now they should be rooted in this and stablished in the faith, and beware of every thing that may weaken and stagger them in the faith. And their danger, even at this time, is from philosophy, when they have more taste for that than for the word of God, and insist upon a rational demonstration of every thing, before they believe the word in simplicity, or pray for faith.

Behold what wond'rous grace
The Father hath bestowed,
On sinners of a mortal race,
To call them sons of God.

he peace of God rule in your hearts, to the ich ye are also called in one body: and be ye nkful. Giving thanks always for all things. give thanks to God always for you all, making stion of you in our prayers.—Col. iii. 15. Eph. 20. 1 Thess. i. 2.

peace of God should rule in our hearts, and ep us, that we may not complain as unbe-s, nor be filled with a servile fear, but on ontrary, always give thanks to God; for if e peace with God, and Christ himself is my and my hope, why should I complain? e Luther says, "May that peace govern and rve you in all temptations, that ye may not nur against God, but be bold in him, he elf having said, In the world ye have tribu-n, in me ye shall have peace." We should ys give thanks, and for all things; then all gs will be unto us grace and favour and bless-

And if we are always giving thanks to we shall have no time left for complaints. we should continue persevering in prayer, watch in the same with thanksgiving, that nay not leave off praying when we give ks, nor giving thanks when we pray; for we pt to forget the one, and to remember our ions better than our thanksgivings. To we are to add intercessions and thanksgiv-for others, which should be observed par-arly by teachers.

Joy to the saints and peace belongs,
The Lord protects their days;
Let Israel tune immortal songs
To his Almighty grace.

Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, &c. Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.—1 Thess. i. 3, 4.

If faith be the work of God, the labour of love and patience of hope is so too; for faith worketh by love; it receives pure love from God, and pure love flows from it. If faith be genuine, it worketh patience, patience produces experience and hope, and hope again produces patience. Jesus is here again styled our hope, and that in the sight of God and our Father; we may therefore hope for the best from him through Christ, and need not fear his wrath, for according to ver. 10. Jesus hath 'delivered us from the wrath to come,' and God hath not designed us for wrath. His gospel will come unto us in power and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; for Jesus himself will be our hope, and his spirit our seal and pledge on the day of redemption. So that we have very great assurance, and may be comforted and established in death.

Let them neglect thy glory, Lord,
Who never knew thy grace;
But our loud songs shall still record
The wonders of thy praise.



But let us who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breast-plate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation. Wherefore also we pray for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power. —1 Thess. v. 8. 2. Thess. i. 11.

We should watch and be sober, like children of the day, or of light, not sleep and be intoxicated with the love of the world, like other men; we should put on faith and love as our breast-plate or helmet. St. Paul makes one breast-plate of faith and love, and unites them intimately together; we therefore should cover ourselves with both at once, if we would withstand the enemy, and have the helmet of hope. Faith, love, and hope must here be inseparable. Let us join with St. Paul in this prayer. Lord, make us worthy of thy calling, that we may walk worthy of our great calling to glory, as becomes blessed children, and heavenly heirs of God, so that nothing earthly may get possession of us. Fulfil all the good pleasure of thy goodness, since nothing can be well pleasing to thy goodness and love, but what is for our salvation. Fulfil also in us the work of faith in power, that our faith may enjoy every good in Christ, and be thereby strengthened, and that the name of Jesus Christ may be glorified in us, and we in him.

Now let my soul arise
And tread the tempter down;
My captain leads me forth
To conquest and a crown.
A feeble saint shall win the day,
Though death and hell obstruct the way.

Now our Lord Jesus himself, and God even our Father, who hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation, &c. But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish and keep you from evil. And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, &c. 2 Thess. ii. 16, 17. iii. 3. 5. See also ver. 16. *The Lord of peace himself give you peace.*

God hath also loved us, so as to give us his Son, the Son of his bosom, and he hath thereby already given us everlasting consolation, and good or certain hope; for Jesus the consolation of Israel, and even the consolation of the Gentiles, is himself our everlasting consolation and our hope, and thus our comfort will pass on through affliction and death into eternal life. May he now strengthen us in every good word and work, and keep us, since he is faithful, by his power, from all evil, that, though ever so seducing, it may not overpower us so as to become unfaithful. May he direct our hearts to the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ, that the sufferings of Christ may give rest to our hearts in the love of God, and in patience, that we may patiently follow him, so shall we have peace of every kind, and every where.

Thus far the Lord has led me on;
Thus far his power prolongs my days;
And every evening shall make known,
Some fresh memorial of his grace.

Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. From which some having swerved, have turned aside unto vain jangling, desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. This charge I commit unto thee, &c.—1 Tim. i. 5. 7. 18, 19.

FAITH unfeigned, charity out of a pure heart and a good conscience, should be joined together in all men, but especially teachers. They should be eminent champions for Jesus Christ, fight a good fight, preserve faith and a good conscience; else they will turn to vain jangling or scholastic altercation, pretending to be masters of the scriptures, and great divines, understanding neither what they saw, nor whereof they affirm: O that all men would accompany their knowledge with a good conscience. But no one has that by nature; in order to obtain it, he must first be enabled to consider his sinful misery, and consequently feel his evil conscience; for God, says Luther, makes evil consciences first, and afterward good ones. When he feels the smart of his evil conscience, he must come to Jesus with faith and repentance, that by virtue of his purifying blood he may be cleansed of his evil conscience.

The Lord on high proclaims
His Godhead from his throne;
Mercy and Justice are the names
By which I will be known.

In thee shall Israel trust,
And see their guilt forgiven;
God will pronounce the sinner just,
And take the saints to heaven.

Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, &c. Exercise thyself unto godliness; for bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things, &c. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation.—1 Tim. iii. 16, iv. 7—9.

GODLINESS in order to be genuine, must flow from the right principle of faith. The principle is that God was manifest in the flesh. The incarnation, life, passion and death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, all his going about, his watching and sleeping, all that he said and did, are meritorious, and were intended for our redemption. All this must be received in a penitent and faithful heart; there this principle of faith must be grounded, whence proceeds true godliness in Christ Jesus, which will enable us to endure persecution with a becoming, ready, and powerful spirit; all the rest, how specious soever it may appear, is only dry morality. We must exercise ourselves in this godliness daily, for it is profitable unto all things, and eminently useful to a teacher; for if he be not godly, he is insipid salt; of what use is such an one, how can he claim to himself a single promise?

The wond'ring world inquires to know
Why should I love my Jesus so:
What are his charms, say they, above
The objects of a mortal love?

Yes, my beloved to my sight
Shews a sweet mixture, red and white:
All human beauties, all divine,
In my beloved meet and shine.



ny man teach otherwise, and consent not to olesome words, even the words of our Lord sus Christ, and to the doctrine which is accord- to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but ting about questions and strifes of words, &c. at they shall proceed no further; for their ly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs so was (Jannes and Jambres, who withstood oses.)—1 Tim. vi. 3—5. 2 Tim. iii. 9.

Y who are not godly themselves, will cer- ly not adhere to the pure doctrine of scrip- , but by their life and conversation seduce from godliness and from the narrow way, in r to make a trade of religion, or of their of- ; they will resist other faithful ministers, duly discharge their office, and raise many es of words. But they shall not proceed far! their angry, virulent, and opprobrious uage will expose them to the scorn and con- pt of all men, even to the ridicule of children. s should encourage the faithful servants of l to go on labouring, praying, enduring, per- ring, and hoping; so will the Lord assist n, and make the worst events turn out the

While Jews on their own law rely,
And Greeks of wisdom boast,
I love the incarnate mystery,
And there I fix my trust.

godliness with contentment is great gain—1 n. vi. 6. read on to ver. 12. *But thou O man God, flee these things. Charge them that are h in this world, that they be not high-minded, trust in uncertain riches, &c.* ver. 11. 17—19.

hat is godly, and therefore has faith, is pos- d of Christ, the greatest gain and treasure, being contented, he has even in a temporal , great gain and riches; for he is not rich hath much, but he who can abstain from , and be contented. The apostle also warns ist covetousness, as the root of all evil; for that will be rich, fall into temptation and a , which will draw them into perdition. He to Timothy, from such withdraw thyself. much more necessary is this admonition to d to all teachers, to flee covetousness; for s deeply concealed like a root in the heart. rich are not to be high-minded, which they are; for wealth begets wantonness and in- ce. Nor are they to trust in uncertain s, which they have to-day, and may lose to- ow, or at least cannot enjoy; but they are ust only in the living God, who giveth us ings richly to enjoy; then shall they heap ealth and treasures in heaven.

Men's portion ofttimes lies below,
'Tis all the happiness they know,
'Tis all they seek; they take their shares,
And leave the rest among their heirs.

I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. Hold fast the form of sound words, &c. That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things. Remember that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead.—2 Tim. i. 12—14. 1 Tim. vi. 12. 2 Tim. ii. 7, 8. See ver. 19. *The foundation of God standeth sure, &c.*

EVERY Christian may and will be assured of his faith and salvation, but he must keep the saving doctrine as a trust in his hands. And how? By the Holy Ghost. He, therefore, who hath not the Holy Ghost, will not duly keep the pure word of God, nor teach, at least not apply and divide it rightly. But the assurance of faith is the effect of a struggle, which we often know not how to endure, but the Lord will give us understanding in all things by his word. We must constantly remember the resurrection of Jesus. All his enemies could not keep him in the grave with their stone, their seal, and their watch; these served only to make his resurrection the more glorious. Now his power and victory are ours. He, our Surety, has fully discharged all our debt, wherefore God hath raised him up; thus we are freed from all guilt and punishment, and have inward peace and strength.

Lord, when thou didst ascend on high,
Ten thousand angels fill'd the sky;
Those heavenly guards around thee wait
Like chariots that attend thy state.

And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus, &c. That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. Preach the word, be instant, &c. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine. Make full proof of thy ministry.—2 Tim. iii. 15—17. iv. 2, 3. 5.

THE word of God should be learnt from our youth, and so that we may not only speculatively know it, but that it may make us wise unto salvation; that it may teach, strengthen, amend, correct, and direct us; that we may be men of God, furnished unto all good works. This concerns all, especially preachers, who should first suffer themselves to be made wise, reproved, amended, and chastised. Else they are not qualified to discharge their office faithfully, they will not be ready to suffer for the word; but they will preach to please their hearers, who cannot bear the truth. Now the present is that evil time, when men, and even those who aim at holy orders, will not bear the wholesome doctrine of repentance and conversion, but provide for themselves such teachers as may gratify their itching ears. They turn away their ears from the truth to fables and useless things. Faithful teachers should be the more watchful and earnest, and other Christians should pray the more for faithful labourers.

Thy grace shall dwell upon my tongue,
And while my lips rejoice,
The men who hear my sacred song,
Shall join their cheerful voice.



ve fought a good fight, I have finished my course. have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid p for me a crown of righteousness, &c. The ord shall deliver me from every evil work, and iall preserve me, &c.—2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. 18.

s first verse has been often chosen as a text a funeral sermon, by persons who have not ght a good fight, who have not even begun to k in the narrow path, and to wrestle for the h: how then can they be said to have finish- their course, to have kept the faith, and hope the crown? They must first repent and be verted, begin their course in the straight way, l fight the good fight of faith. If we have ıe this, we must go on daily and run the race ich is set before us, keep the faith and con- d for it; for every thing will attempt to se- :e us from it; faith has more enemies than · thing else. Lord Jesus! thou art He that peth faith for ever, grant that we may keep it, l happily finish our course; direct our hearts petually to that crown, deliver us from all , and lead us through adversity and death to heavenly kingdom. To thee be glory for r and ever. Amen.

God hath laid up in heaven for me
A crown which cannot fade;
The righteous Judge, at that great day,
Shall place it on my head.

They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, &c. But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine, &c. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works, &c. that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.—Titus i. 16. ii. 1. 7, 8.

ALL true knowledge is, according to chap. 1, an acknowledgment of the truth, which is after godliness, for the whole of divine truth and doctrine leads in each and every part to godliness, and the hope of everlasting life. He therefore, who is not godly, hath no right knowledge, and is disqualified for every good work, particularly for the faithful discharge of the ministerial office; though he advances many truths, yet by not shewing himself a pattern of good works in the course of his life, he demolishes by his practise the edifice which he had raised by his precept. He obstructs the faith, and consequently the power of the word. His people think it impossible, or needless, to live as he teaches, because he does not live so himself. Hence we read that a bishop must be blameless, and therefore himself truly converted; he must be as a steward of God, in order to give every one his due in the house of God; but an unconverted teacher doth not understand this; for he hath not yet received what is necessary for himself: thus he gives occasion to the people to speak evil of him, and esteem him an hypocrite.

Thus saith the just, the great command,
Let all thy inward parts unite
To love thy Maker and thy God,
With utmost vigour and delight.



Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, and to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, and gentle, shew all meekness unto all men. For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, &c. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us, &c. These things I will that thou affirm.—Titus iii. 1—8.

We are to be ready to every good work, and gentle, showing meekness unto all men. And why? Because we were heretofore foolish and wicked, and God hath patience with us. He hath justified us and brought us unto salvation, not for our works, but solely from his grace and mercy. This should move us the more earnestly to every good work, he having abundantly poured out upon us his Holy Spirit, that we may be enabled to do it.

Our souls adore God's throne supreme,
And bless his Providence;
For magistrates of meaner name,
Our glory and defence.

Kingdoms on firm foundations stand,
While virtue finds reward;
And sinners perish from the land,
By justice and the sword.

And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful. I thank my God, making mention of thee always in ***my prayers, that the communication of thy faith may become effectual, by the acknowledging of every good thing, which is in you in Christ Jesus.*** —Titus iii. 14. Philem. 4. 6.

THE faithful should ever improve in the knowledge and enjoyment of the good things which we have in Christ, and so advance further in the gospel, considering the whole gospel as a letter sent to them, as it still promises and offers to them every good thing; for that which was written before, was written for our learning, comfort, and hope, we should embrace it all immediately, as now offered and presented to us, and as our property. By this acknowledgment our faith will grow powerful, strong, full, sure and firm, and it will become active in love and good works. Thus the divine knowledge will bring us grace, peace, and all things pertaining to life and godliness, and not suffer us to be unfruitful; then will all our works flow directly from faith, and we shall not only do some good now and then, but shall be found in the habit of good works, for every necessary occasion and use.

Save me, O Lord, from every foe,
In thee my trust I place:
Though all the good that I can do,
Can ne'er deserve thy grace.

His hand provides my constant food,
He fills my daily cup:
Much I am pleased with present good,
But more rejoice in hope.



Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance, &c.—1 Pet. i. 3—5.

WHOEVER entertains a true hope of the eternal inheritance, and would in like manner bless God for it, must be regenerate and become a true child of God; for it is written, "If we are children, then are we heirs." He therefore who is fallen off from his baptismal covenant, and returned to his carnal mind, must be born again, as we find it enforced by two affirmations in John iii. Now he who is born again, hath a sure hope of the eternal inheritance by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. As surely as Jesus is risen from the dead, he shall be raised to a life and inheritance eternal. And if his faith be so weak that he is doubtful how to pass through adversity in death, then he has a comfort before him in the words, which assure him, that he shall be kept by the power of God unto salvation, and that, according to ver. 7. this trial of his faith shall not weaken, but render it the more precious.

Blest be the everlasting God,
The Father of our Lord;
Be his abounding mercy praised,
His majesty adored.

When from the dead he raised his Son,
And called him to the sky,
He gave our souls a lively hope
That they should never die.



our, change our faith to sight,
or ever die;
our souls be all delight,
ry tear be dry.



Be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled. Be ready always to give an answer, &c. with meekness and fear: having a good conscience, that whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. They think it strange, that you run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you.—1 Pet. iii. 14—16. iv. 4.

CHRISTIANS ought not to bring sufferings on themselves by their own perverseness, as Peter did before his fall; yet they must expect to suffer; hence we read (ver. 17.) "It is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well-doing;" after which he again refers us (ver. 18.) to the patient suffering of Christ, who was so innocent, and suffered so much for our sakes. Him we are admonished to follow. It appears strange indeed to the men of the world, who will not hear of the imitation of Christ, that we run not with them to the same excess of riot; and they speak evil of us or threaten us. We are not to be afraid of their terror, nor troubled, but we are to be ready to give an answer to every man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us; which answer must be given with meekness, as Peter answered his accusers on the day of Pentecost. And all who have reproached the good lives of God's faithful servants in Christ shall be put to confusion; no one shall hurt us, if we follow after that which is good.

In vain the sons of earth or hell
Tell me a thousand frightful things;
My God in safety makes me dwell,
Beneath the shadow of his wings.

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, &c. If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, &c. And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?—1 Pet. iv. 12, 13. 16—18.

CHRISTIANS should not think sufferings strange; for their Head hath suffered; him they should follow, and suffer with Christ for the sake of Christ, which is matter of comfort and joy to them; it is the Christian's glory, and will be rewarded by Christ with everlasting joy and bliss. They should not suffer as evil-doers, plunging themselves into distress by their own misconduct, but as Christians; and they should glorify God on the occasion, by praising his dispensation, his just judgment on the flesh, for Christians are still encumbered with flesh, which must be continually mortified. Therefore the judgment of God must begin with the house of God, and since the righteous shall scarcely, or with difficulty, be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? how shall they fare in the present times of judgment? and how shall they escape everlasting judgment and destruction? Alas! do we not in these times perceive the wrath of God against sin?

Eternal King, I fear thy name,
Teach me to know how frail I am;
And when my soul must hence remove,
Give me a mansion in thy love.



Be sober, be vigilant: because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, &c. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.—1 Pet. v. 8. 10.

SATAN comes sometimes like a roaring lion, with vehement persecution, sometimes in the shape of a cunning serpent. We should therefore be sober, abstaining from a love of the world, perpetually watching, praying, and holding fast the word in faith; such a faith will enable us to withstand him by the word, and by prayer, and even to extinguish his fiery darts. Though we suffer, we should remember, that the same afflictions are accomplished in our brethren; and that God, being the God of all grace, will permit no affliction to press too long, or beyond that we are able. Our afflictions endure but a short time, and he hath called us to everlasting glory. By sufferings he will make us perfect, and stablish, strengthen, settle us. Now as he is the God of all grace, we must continue faithfully to depend upon his grace in Christ, and make that our foundation, upon which we must build first and last.

Now Satan comes with dreadful roar,
 And threatens to destroy;
He worries when he can't devour,
 With a malicious joy.

He feeds our hope with airy dreams,
 Or fills with slavish fear;
And holds us still in wide extremes,
 Presumption or despair.

Giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience, and to patience godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity.—2 Pet. i. 5—7.

St. Peter had shown before, that grace and peace would be multiplied unto us, through the knowledge of God and Christ, and that the divine power will give us all things. He next proceeds to exhort to various duties and virtues. We must therefore be first converted to Christ, and obtain grace, peace, and power, else all our virtues are mere hypocrisy. If these virtues be not of the genuine sort, we are not yet arrived at a true living knowledge. If we are, and have at the same time grace, peace, and power, we must not sit down idle, but give all diligence to improve in virtue. And the whole must result from faith, whence cometh virtue and power or strength. To this must be added discretion or knowledge, that we may discern and know what is right or wrong, and temperance will enable us to abstain from that which we know to be wrong. As this may prove difficult, patience is necessary, and we must use the more diligence to make our calling and election sure, that we may at length make a glorious entrance into the everlasting kingdom.

Broad is the road that leads to death,
And thousands walk together there:
But wisdom shows a narrower path
With here and there a traveller.



The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, &c. He is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, &c. The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, &c. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting to the coming of the day of God.—2 Pet. ii. 9. iii. 9—12.

How great is the pre-eminence of the righteous above the ungodly! God delivers them in all his judgments against the wicked, as he did Noah, ver. 5. and Lot, ver. 7. He not only delivers them from all temptation, but gives them victory and a blessing at the last, so that all things work together for their good. Though we are frail, yet he is long-suffering toward us. He is long-suffering even toward the careless, and waits for their repentance; for he is by no means willing that any should perish, but that all should be converted, and is ready to give to every man grace for repentance. This should invite the careless to turn, and encourage the faithful to be always better prepared by daily repentance for the great day, earnestly hastening and patiently waiting for the coming of the day of God.

Arise my soul, awake my voice,
And tunes of pleasure sing:
Loud Hallelujahs shall address
My Saviour and my King.

The arms of everlasting love
Beneath my soul be placed;
And on the rock of ages set
My slippery footsteps fast.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and give us our sins, and cleanse us from a cousness. And now, little children, ab &c. Behold what manner of love the F bestowed upon us, that we should be sons of God, &c.—1 John i. 9. ii. 28. iii

If we do not acknowledge and confess we deceive ourselves, and our sins ar given; but if we penitently confess seek for remission in the blood of faithfulness, and even his justice, will to pardon and cleanse us from all un ness; for he hath promised both. B ful, he must keep his promise, and he cannot punish sin twice; at the he can by no means allow any sin t minion over us. We should therefo ally abide in our faithful Saviour, and ed by his blood and spirit; so sha joy on the day of judgment, and not confusion. Let us likewise remembe and grace which God hath shewed that we are called, and actually are, hi How exalted a dignity is this? W fear the scorn of the world, in which known, for the world knoweth not hi a comfort to the sons of God.

Behold what wond'rous love
The Father hath bestowed
On sinners of a mortal race,
To call them sons of God,



Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure. We know that we have passed from death unto life, &c. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, &c. And we have seen and do testify, &c.—1 John iii. 3. 14. iv. 12. 14.

SOME say, we trust all will be saved, but they deceive themselves; in order to profess a solid hope of salvation, we must cleanse ourselves from all sinful ways, particularly from worldly-mindedness and uncharitableness; the world hates the true children of God, but we love them, and by this we know that we have passed from death unto life, and therefore have a certain hope of everlasting life, where all will be love. How then can he esteem himself a true child of God, and hope for eternal life, who, in writing or conversation, despises and ridicules the servants and children of God. But if we love one another, knowing the great love of God towards us, we shall become like him, as his children, and abide in him and he in us, and his love will be perfect in us. We may be perfectly assured of his love, and be confident that we shall abide for ever in him, and live with him for ever; we know it from the Holy Spirit, which he hath given us, and which is our seal and pledge on the day of our redemption.

The saints on earth, and all the dead
But one communion make;
All join in Christ, their living head,
And of his grace partake.

iat came by water and blood, even Jesus
not by water only, but by water and
:. He that believeth on the Son of God,
witness in himself. And this is the re-
iat God hath given to us eternal life; and
fe is in his Son. He that hath the Son,
ife.—1 John v. 6. 10—12.

came with water and blood, not with
alone, with his Holy Spirit, to sanctify us
also with blood, that he might first aton
as. We should therefore first of all patient
s and obtain remission of sins in his bloo
n may we hope to obtain the water of
is Holy Ghost, for our inward purification
nctification. And the Holy Spirit will
witness within us, that the Spirit, or the
the Spirit, the gospel, is truth; that Go
fulfil his word, and as he hath promised
give us everlasting life. We have thr
nesses of it in heaven, and three on ear
we believe in Christ, we have this true t
in ourselves, and may therefore assure
that having the Son of God, we have
life; for he is, according to ver. 20.
and consequently, being in him, we
entered into everlasting life.

Let all our tongues be one,
To praise our God on high;
Who from his bosom sent his
To bring us strangers nigh
My Saviour's pierced side,
Poured out a double floo
By water we are purified,
And pardoned by the



Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. I have no greater joy, than to hear that my children walk in truth. We therefore ought to receive such (as are persecuted for the truth.) *that we might be fellow-helpers to the truth.*—2 John ver. 8; 3 John 4. 8. See Heb. i. 3. 14.

We ought to receive and assist one another, and take care that neither we nor others lose the good which we or they have wrought by our labours; for Jesus himself laboured for our souls, when he (Heb. i. 2.) "by himself purged our sins." What a noble and complete purification was this! We ourselves shall be his reward, and he will take care not to lose us, who are the reward and prize given to him by his Father. He sits as our great king at the right hand of the Majesty on high, who will mightily protect us against all our enemies; and for this purpose he hath sent forth his angels, as "ministering spirits" (ver. 14.) for our service, to protect us against the wicked enemy and lying spirit, that we may attain to salvation. We should therefore be fellow helpers one of another, and assist each other in the way to salvation.

We bow before thy face,
And sound thy glories high,
Hosannah to the God of grace
That lays his thunder by.

On earth thy mercy reigns,
And triumphs all above:
But, Lord, how weak are mortal strains
To sing immortal love!

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, &c. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, &c.—Heb. ii. 9. 14, 15.

JESUS did so humble himself for our sakes that it was necessary an angel should strengthen him. He tasted death for us all, and that by the grace of God. The grace and love of God moveth him to taste death for us all, none excepted; we may therefore, as many as believe in Christ, rest assured of the favour of God, and that we shall not taste death, Jesus having tasted it for us. He took upon him our flesh and blood, and by his death disarmed death and the devil, and delivered us not only from death itself, but also from the fear of it, that we might not all our life-time be slavishly afraid of death and hell. God hath already brought many sons unto glory; and he will lead us safely through the ways of death; for Jesus has the keys of death and hell.

Jesus with all the saints above
My tongue would bear her part,
Would sound aloud thy saving love,
And sing thy bleeding heart.

Bless'd be the Lamb, my dearest Lord,
Who bought me with his blood,
And quench'd his Father's flaming sword
In his own vital flood.



Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For we who have believed do enter into rest. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. Let us labour, therefore, to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same examples of unbelief. Heb. iv. 1. 3. 9. 11.

O THAT none may come short of it! were the last affecting words of a pious prince on his death-bed; and all Christian ministers and parents utter the same wish for their congregations and children. But if this be a proper prayer for the faithful, how can the impenitent go on so carelessly expecting eternal rest, whilst they walk in the broad way, which leads to everlasting pain and misery! If then we are walking in the straight way, Lord, grant that we may fear, lest we neglect any thing, lest any come short, or leave any thing undone, which may contribute to our peace. Strengthen and preserve us in the faith, that we may apply to ourselves the words, "We which have believed do enter into rest." Let our whole life, our thoughts and actions tend to it, and let us give all diligence, labouring, praying, and suffering, that we may arrive at it. Deliver us from our unbelief, that we may enter into rest with a perfect faith.

Israel, who saw God's works of grace,
Yet tempt their Maker to his face;
A faithless unbelieving brood,
That tired the patience of their God.

Look back, my soul, with holy dread,
And view these ancient rebels dead;
Attend the offered grace to-day,
Nor lose the blessing by delay.

Christ, in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard, in that he feared, &c.—Heb. v. 7—9.

JESUS offered up for us to God prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, and he was heard in our behalf, thereby making all our prayers an acceptable sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour to God, that we too may be heard. And though our prayer be very feeble, yet it is connected with the faithful earnest prayer of Christ on the mount of Olives, and on the cross, and with his intercession still continued. It ascends to God, and is to him an agreeable sound. Then will God certainly succour us; for Jesus hath already secured his aid, and we are in fact already assisted in our pursuit of his heavenly kingdom. But we must still suffer with him. If the Son of God learned obedience by the things which he suffered, we shall not be losers by our sufferings, but learn obedience, the obedience of faith. And if Jesus be the author and ground of our salvation, no suffering ought to weaken our faith, but to strengthen it, and forward our salvation.

Now let our pains be all forgot,
Our hearts no more repine;
Our sufferings are not worth a thought,
When, Lord, compared with thine.

God willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, &c. Heb. vi. 17—19. See also chap. vii. 20, 21. concerning the oath with which Christ entered upon his office.

GOD knows how unbelieving we are, and therefore gives us not only many promises, but adds to them an oath. The oath which he sware unto Abraham concerns us also, and as it implies all the other promises, they are all confirmed by an oath. He instituted Christ into his office of high priest by an oath, so that all his promises in Christ are yea, and amen, and upon oath; thus, that by two immutable things, by the promise and the oath, we have an exceeding strong consolation, and a sure and stedfast anchor of the soul, which will not permit us to suffer shipwreck on the sea of this world; and we are assured, that his council is unchangeable, and that whatever he hath promised us he will punctually perform; for as God cannot lie, neither can he break his oath.

The oath and promise of the Lord
Join to confirm his wondrous grace;
Eternal power performs the word,
And fills all heaven with endless praise.

We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle. Christ being come, an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, &c. Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, &c.—Heb. viii. 1, 2. ix. 11, 12.

JESUS is our high priest, hence he is able (chap. vii. 25.) to save us, and maketh intercession for us. To save us and make intercession for us is his constant employment in heaven. He sitteth at the right hand of God, on the throne of majesty, as our Head and King, and will powerfully protect us his members against all our enemies; and being the ministers of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, he will abundantly communicate to us all the good things and gifts which he hath received for us, and take the best care of us. He is entered into the holy place and everlasting sanctuary, through the great and perfect tabernacle of his body, which was given up for us in death; and this, not like the priests of old with strange blood, but with his own, which purchased eternal redemption. Thus (ver. 14.) he will purge our conscience from dead works, to serve the living God. So that his blood hath procured us forgiveness, peace of conscience, and power to serve God willingly.

Once in the circuit of a year
With blood, but not his own,
Aaron within the veil appears,
Before the golden throne.



But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God, &c. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified, &c. This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them, &c.—Heb. x. 12—17.

THE sacrifices under the Old Testament did not take away sin, so as to leave the mind perfectly at peace; there was every year a fresh remembrance of the sin, as having not yet been discharged. But by the sacrifice of Christ, which is eternally sufficient, all sins were perfectly atoned for at once, and so done away, that they are not only remitted to us who believe, but are no longer remembered. So that under the New Testament we need no longer be troubled in conscience about any sin, as not being discharged, and may therefore enjoy a quiet conscience. But in the same covenant it is the will of God to write his law in our hearts, or to give us a new heart, and a willing mind, that we need no longer be compelled, as they were under the Old Testament. All of us, great and small, are taught to know him. And if our enemies disturb and afflict our minds, or the church, we ought to wait, for Jesus still waits, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet.

Jesus, in thee our eyes behold
A thousand glories more
Than the rich gems and polished gold
The sons of Aaron wore.

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh: let us draw near with a true heart, &c.—Heb. x. 19, 20. 22.

JESUS our high-priest being entered into the holiest by his blood, we have likewise the joy of entering into it, the veil, that is, his flesh, being done away on the cross. We may therefore enter, without fear, with entire joy, into the holiest in heaven, into the most intimate communion with God: this liberty and joy is that new and living way; the advantage of the new covenant in preference of the old, for in the latter there still subsisted much servile fear. We should therefore avail ourselves of this liberty, advance with a sincere heart, with true repentance, and a spirit without guile, without reserving one sin, and with a full assurance of faith, applying to ourselves Christ and all his merits, and living in faith, in his blood as our element, and sprinkling ourselves with it, or purging ourselves from all our sins. This alone will deliver us from an evil conscience, whilst we seek peace of mind not in our own virtue but in the blood of Christ, and daily through assisting grace cleanse ourselves with the pure water of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus, the king of glory, reigns
On Sion's heavenly hill:
Looks like a lamb that has been slain,
And wears his priesthood still.



Without faith it is impossible to please God, &c. By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, &c. By faith Moses forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing him who is invisible.—Heb. xi. 6. 8, 9. 27.

FAITH is called, in ver. 1, "the evidence of things not seen." It is conversant with none but invisible things, promised in the word of God. By this faith alone we please God, as Enoch did, and Noah, when he received a command concerning that which he did not yet see, but believed, and was thereby justified. By the same faith Abraham went out, and knew not whither. He could not take a prospect of the land of promise, and when he was in it, he considered himself as a stranger; for he, together with all the faithful, looked for that invisible country in heaven. By the same faith Moses denied himself all the pleasures of sin, and all the treasures of Egypt, and chose in their stead distress and the reproach of Christ. Nor did he fear the king's wrath, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. In like manner we should adhere in faith to the invisible God and his word, though we see no help before us: by this means we shall please God, and be delivered from every trouble.

Faith is the brightest evidence
 Of things beyond our sight;
Breaks through the clouds of flesh and sense,
 And dwells in heavenly light.

Ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, &c. But ye are come unto mount Sion, &c.—Heb. xii. 18. 22—24.

HERE again we see, how much more excellent the new covenant is than the old. In the latter the Israelites came to the terrible fiery Mount Sinai, insomuch that even Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake. But in the new covenant the faithful came to Mount Sion, where no slavish fear of death or hell prevails; for they are admitted as citizens and inmates in the city of the living God, in the heavenly Jerusalem; they are, as it were, already entered into heaven together with Christ their head, and in the midst of many thousand angels will not judge them; being numbered among the spirits of just men made perfect, who cannot be judged. They are not with Moses, but with the Mediator of the new covenant; and his blood, with which they are sprinkled, speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. How great is this comfort!

Now we are come to Sion's hill,
The city of our God,
Where mildest words declare his will,
And spread his love abroad.



Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is pleasing in his sight, &c.—Heb. xii. 20, 21.

GOD is a God of peace, for he reconciled us to himself by his Son, and made peace on the cross, so that all his thoughts concerning us are peace. He brought him again from the dead, that great shepherd of his sheep, after he had fully discharged our debt by his blood, and taken the guilt and punishment upon himself that we might have peace. Jesus hath assigned and bequeathed to us the salvation he purchased with his blood, in his testament, which is eternally valid. We may now consider ourselves as universal heirs of our God and Saviour, and need no longer fear him with a slavish fear, he being the God of peace; nor need we complain of any want, or of the multitude of our enemies; for Jesus is our shepherd, who will give us a full pasture, life and abundance; he will not suffer us to want anything, and powerfully protect us against all our enemies. He will also make us perfect in every good work to do his will, and he will work in us that which is well pleasing in his sight. So shall we have sufficient strength and power.

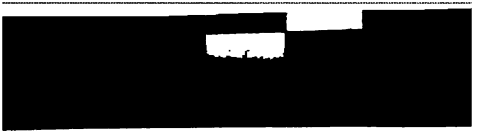
I love my shepherd's voice,
His watchful eye shall keep
My wandering soul among
Ten thousand of his sheep;
He feeds his flock, he calls their names,
His bosom bears the tender lambs.

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations, knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, &c. Be patient, therefore, &c. Stablish your hearts. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, &c. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.—James i. 2—4. 12. v. 7, 8. 11. Rev. xiii. 10.

We need not therefore dread the temptations of the world, sin and Satan, nor apprehend that our faith will be weakened or overcome by them. No, we are to consider temptation as matter of joy, as the strengthening of our faith, and persevere with patience unto the end. For faith and patience are always connected, and during this faithful patience, we shall have no want, but every kind of abundance, and after having been safely guarded through the temptation, we shall receive the crown of life. We should therefore look up to other patient bearers of the cross, such as Job, and more especially to Jesus himself, that in the midst of prevailing judgments we may be able to apply these words to ourselves: "Here is the patience and the faith of the saints." The general path of Christian pilgrims is: Through suffering and patience to glory.

How would the tempter boast aloud
If I became his prey!
Behold the sons of hell how proud,
At thy so long delay.

But they shall fly at thy rebuke,
And Satan hide his head;
He knows the terrors of thy look,
And hears thy voice with dread.



If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, &c., and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering, &c. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, &c. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, &c.—James i. 5, 6. 17. iii. 17.

By nature, without the Spirit of truth, we are all destitute of true wisdom. He who hath not felt this want, nor prayed for the Holy Spirit and true wisdom, is not yet wise, however learned and however great a philosopher he may be. Many a young student imagines himself wise, and his head to be completely furnished, when he has not attained to the first step of wisdom here mentioned, *purity:* his heart is unsettled, quite desolate and void of spiritual gifts. Another is not peaceable and gentle, but is impatient of contradiction, contentious and proud, and therefore is defective in the other steps toward wisdom. He hath not the wisdom from above, but that which is earthly, sensual, and even devilish. But he who perceives his want of wisdom, especially of a due knowledge of the love of God in Christ, which is the most excellent wisdom, must pray for it, and the Lord will most certainly give it him.

There's none can know the Father right
But those who learn him from the Son;
Nor can the Son be well received
But where the Father makes him known.

Be afflicted, and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. James iv. 9, 10. For penitent David says, *I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly, I go mourning all the day long.* Psalm xxxviii. 6.

HAD David lived in our days, the scoffers and children of this world would have made a jest of this bowing of his head. But no man in his senses will bow his head out of hypocrisy, knowing how ready the world is to ridicule him. It were to be wished for thee, thou child of this world, that thou wert bowed down, since thou canst not without it be lifted up, nor saved. Some, that they may not pass for hypocrites, put on an affected joy. This is hypocrisy. But if thou art greatly bowed down, O penitent sinner, and mournest, adhere no longer to thy sins, but look up to the Lamb of God, who hath borne thy guilt, and reconciled thee to God; then shall the burthen of thy sins, if not immediately, yet at last, drop from thy conscience, and thou wilt be lifted up and comforted, in proportion as thou hast been bowed down.

Oh, the sharp pangs of smarting pain
My dear Redeemer bore,
When knotty whips, and ragged thorns
His sacred body tore.

'Twere you, my sins, my cruel sins,
His chief tormentors were;
Each of my crimes became a nail,
And unbelief the spear.



The prayer of faith shall save the sick. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves, &c. Now unto him that is able to keep you, &c.—James v. 15, 16. Jude 20. 24.

THE faithful should pray fervently, both for those who are bodily and spiritually sick. They will infallibly be heard; for it is here written, "The prayer of faith shall save the sick." Prayer is, in all cases, the best relief, and has great effect. Luther says, it is a great almighty thing. St. James refers us to the example of Elias. You see, says Luther, a single man praying, and prevailing by means of that prayer over the world, heaven and earth, that God may suffer it to stand. How great is the power and influence of a true prayer; nothing is impossible to it. By prayer we may introduce ourselves and our friends into heaven, and supply every want, particularly the want of wisdom, and of a sense of the love of Christ, which is the highest wisdom. By prayer and the word we may mutually build up ourselves on our most holy faith, then the Lord will keep us from falling, and present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. Amen, Hallelujah.

How sweet and awful is the place,
With Christ within the doors,
While everlasting love displays
The choicest of her stores.

Jesus Christ is the faithful witness, and the first-begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, &c.—Rev. i. 1. 5, 6.

JOHN saw this Jesus as he walked among the seven candlesticks, among the seven churches, and had in his right hand seven stars, which were the angels of the seven churches. And when John fell at his feet as dead, he said unto him, "Fear not; I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold, I am alive, and have the keys of hell and of death." All this is written for our comfort. Jesus, the true witness, will bear witness among us, in our hearts, by his Spirit, of his counsel, and of his and his Father's love; for he hath promised it, therefore his faithfulness requires it. He hath loved us, and delivered himself up unto death for us. He hath washed us, who believe, from all our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests before God his Father. We therefore may go in and out before God as priests clothed in his holy garments, praying and blessing; and being kings we may subdue all our enemies, and at length even the fear of death. Hence he says unto us also, Fear not. He will shut up the gates of hell from us, safely through death.

Now to the Lamb that once was slain,
Be endless blessings paid;
Salvation, glory, joy remain
For ever on thy head.



I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty; but thou art rich, &c. I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth, &c.—Rev. ii. 9. iii. 15—17.

JESUS saith to all the seven bishops, "I know thy works." He knoweth all our works, good and evil, and particularly notices teachers, for he walks among the seven candlesticks, and his eyes are as a flame of fire. He knoweth the tribulation of the faithful, and will succour them. And if they be poor in spirit, he saith unto them, "thou art rich." For to the poor in spirit belongs the kingdom of heaven (Matth. v.) But the bishop of Laodicea imagining himself rich, Jesus said unto him, "Thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, and knowest it not," which was the worst of all. But he advises him what to buy, and to annoint his eyes, that he might see. O that all they, who are rich in their own imagination, and yet lukewarm, more especially ministers, might earnestly pray for the eye-salve, mentioned in the 18th verse, that they may see their poverty and misery; lest Jesus spew them out! but they who are wretched and know it not, and pray for repentance and grace, will not be thus rejected.

My guilt appeared but small before,
Till terribly I saw
How perfect, holy, just and pure,
Was thine eternal law.

These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works; and thy labour, and thy patience, &c. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent.—Rev. ii. 1—5.

JESUS walketh even now in the midst of his churches, and sees all things with his eyes, which are as a flame of fire. He hath the stars, the teachers in his hands. Both teachers and hearers should be awakened by this, to walk in holy fear, and examine themselves narrowly. He saith of the bishop of Ephesus—I know thy works, thy labour, and thy patience, thou hast laboured for my name's sake, and hast not fainted. Let every teacher and every Christian consider, and ask himself, Can Jesus say this of me? Do I labour indefatigably for his name's sake? Or do I seek my own glory or advantage in my labour? Have I not fainted? Or have I done all from motives of love, and not left my first love? We have all of us reason to be bowed down, and repent, and be very attentive, and do our utmost to overcome; for it is seven times repeated, "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear. He that overcometh," &c.

We sing the glories of thy love,
We sound thy dreadful name;
The Christian church unites the songs
Of Moses and the Lamb.

And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, &c. said to the mountains and rocks fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, &c.: for the great day of his wrath is come. (the angel said) *Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not, &c.*—Rev. vi. 15—17. vii. 3. ix. 4. 20, 21.

In the present times, high and low, and particularly the rich, are quite secure, fearing no danger, no wrath of God; but in the terrible judgments which are to come they will wish to hide themselves in the rocks and clefts, fearing and dreading the wrath of the Lamb; nay, according to chap. ix. 6. they shall seek death, and shall not find it. But the faithful shall be sealed before, and shall not be hurt. God knows, and will know hereafter, how to spare his own, and will continue to make a difference. Yet amidst all judgments, there will be many who will not repent, but will blaspheme and murmur against God, as indeed many do at present, and we need not wonder at it; Christ hath here announced it. Yet in the course of these judgments, especially in the great earthquakes, some will be so terrified, that they will give glory to God, and be converted as the centurion was at the cross of Christ.

Where promises and grace
Can neither melt nor move,
The angry Lamb resents
The injuries of his love,
Awakes his wrath without delay,
As lions roar and tear the prey.

Another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, &c. And the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with the fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth, &c.—Rev. viii. 3—5.

PRAYER is a gift of God the Holy Ghost, whence the Holy Ghost is called a spirit of grace and of prayer, which shall be poured out upon us, if we look up to Jesus on the cross. Jesus merited for us this spirit of prayer, and hath already received for us that and all other gifts. To him, the true angel of the covenant, much incense is given, that he should offer it up with the prayer of all saints. Would we pray fervently, and have our prayer ascend directly as the smoke of a grateful incense to God, we must fetch fire from the altar, that is, look up to Jesus as sacrificed for us on the altar of the cross, and not pray in any other than in his name. We must, moreover, sanctify ourselves; for the prayer of saints is here mentioned twice. The angel cast the fire into the earth, and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake: thus the prayer of saints is succeeded by great judgments on the followers of antichrist. What judgments of earthquakes, war, and other distresses have not we experienced! Lord, grant that we may patiently consider the signs of the times, and thy word, and have recourse to fervent prayer!

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.—Rev. xx. 12.

THIS evening concludes one year more. How soon will the last evening of life appear, and place us before the judgment-seat! O that we could examine ourselves this evening, how we shall stand before that judgment. How have we spent this year, and our whole life? All our thoughts, words, and actions are written in the book of God's omniscience, and in that of our own consciences. These books will be opened, and we shall be judged according to their contents. We should therefore examine and judge our conduct, not by our own judgment or that of other men, but by the holy scripture; for every man shall be judged according to his works. How will the careless sinner pass before this judgment with his wicked life? O my Saviour, grant that we may thoroughly examine and judge ourselves, and fly from the judgment-seat to the mercy-seat, and be ever found penitent, faithful, and ready, that this last evening of the year, and the last evening of our lives may both be happily ended, and we may appear with joy before thy judgment.

The Lord, the judge, before his throne
Bids the whole earth draw nigh,
The nations near the rising sun,
And near the western sky.





A TABLE OF TEXTS

ILLUSTRATED IN THIS WORK.

PAGE

GENESIS.

11 i. 3. 2 Cor. iv. 6.
12 iv. 3. 5. 9.
13 vi. 12. Matt. xxiv. 38, 39.
14 viii. 1.
15 xv. 1. xxvi. 24.
16 xviii. 17. 19. Amos iii. 7.
17 xxii. 8. 14.
18 xxxix. 9. 10. 23.
19 xlvii. 12. l. 21.
20 xlix. 18.

EXODUS.

21 i. 12. ii. 23. 25.
22 xii. 10. 11. 13.
23 xiv. 13. 14. 15.
24 xxiii. 22. 25. 27.

LEVITICUS.

25 xvi. 30. 31. xvii. 11.
26 vi. 9. 12.
27 xix. 17.

NUMBERS.

28 ix. 17—19.

DEUTERONOMY.

29 vi. 4—7.
30 vii. 6. 9. 10.
31 viii. 10. 14. 18. ix. 6.
32 x. 12. 16. xi. 8.
33 xv. 10. 11. xvi. 19.
34 xviii. 15. 17.

PAGE

DEUTERONOMY.

35 xxx. 6. 14. 15. 19.
36 xxxi. 3. 6.
37 xxxii. 3—6.
38 xxxii. 9—12.
39 xxxii. 29. 36. 39. 46.
40 xxxiii. 3. 29.

JOSHUA.

41 xi. 15. xxi. 44. 45. xxiv. 14.
42 xxiii. 3. 11—14.
43 xxiv. 15. 16. 24.

JUDGES.

44 ii. 10. 14. 15.
45 xv. 16. 18. 19.

RUTH.

46 i. 16. 17. iii. 5. 11.

1 SAMUEL.

47 ii. 3. 6. 9.
48 iii. 1. 19. 20. 22.
49 iv. 12.
50 xii. 20—22.
51 xv. 17. 19. 23.
52 xvii. 32. 36. 37. 45.
53 xxv. 29.

2 SAMUEL.

54 vii. 27—29.
55 xxii. 2. 3. 7. 29—31.

PAGE

1 KINGS.

56 viii. 23, 24. 29.
57 xi. 1. 4.
58 xviii. 21. 2 Kings xvii. 38. 40. 41.
59 xix. 11. 12.

2 KINGS.

60 iv. 3. 6. 43. 1 Kings xvii. 13. 14.
61 v. 25—27.
62 vi. 16. 17. Heb. i. 14.

1 CHRONICLES.

63 iv. 10. v. 20.
64 xxviii. 2.
65 xxix. 10—13.

2 CHRONICLES.

66 xiv. 11. xx. 12. 17.
67 xv. 2. 7. 15. xvi. 9.
68 xx. 20.
69 xxvi. 5. 15. 16. xxvii. 6. xxxii. 23.
70 xxxiii. 12. 13. 15.
71 xxxiv. 3. 31.

EZRA.

72 v. 5. viii. 22. 23. 31.

NEHEMIAH.

73 i. 7. 8. 11.

ESTHER.

74 iv. 14.

JOB.

75 i. 21. ii. 10.
76 v. 19. x. 12. 13. 1 Sam. vii. 12.
77 xxxiii. 15. 16, 17, 29. 30.

PSALMS.

78 ii. 12.
79 vi. 9. ix. 9. 10. 18.
80 x. 14. xi. 1. xii. 1. 5. xiii. 5.
81 xxvii. 1. 5. 13, 14.
82 xxxi. 1, 2. 5. 19. 20.
83 xxxiv. 4. 6. 7. 15. 19. 22.
84 xxxvii. 7. 8. 9.
85 xxxix. 6. 7. 8. xl. 16. 17.
86 xlv. 3—5. xlvi. 1. 11.

PAGE

PSALMS.

87 xlviii. 3. 14. l. 15. 23.
88 lii. 7. 8. liv. 2. 3. lv. 17. 22.
89 lvi. 4. 9. lvii. 1. lix. 9, lx. 12. lxi. 1—3.
90 lxv. 2. 3. lxvi. 18. lxix. 3. lxx. 5.
91 lxxiv. 12. lxxv. 7. lxxvi. 10. lxxvii. 11. 19. 20. lxxviii. 36. 38.
92 lxxx. 7. 14. 17. lxxxi. 13. 14. lxxxiii. 18.
93 lxxxiv. 11. 12. lxxxv. 4. lxxxvi. 3—5.
94 lxxxix. 3. 15—18.
95 xcii. 12—15. xciv. 15.
96 cii. 2. 13—15. 28.
97 cvi. 13—15. 44. 45.
98 cx. 3. cxi. 6. 7.
99 cxv. 3. cxvi. 16. cxviii. 6. 11. 13. 14.
100 cxix. 9. 18. 22. 30. 33.
101 cixx. 45. 52. 59. 60.
102 cxix. 56. 57. 72. 103. 62. 164.
103 cxix. 67. 71. 75. 88. 94.
104 cxix. 104. 105. 132. 135. 24.
105 cxix. 145. 165 168. 176.
106 cxxi. 1—3. cxxv. 2. cxxxii. 9. 14.
107 cxlvi. 5. 6. cxlviii. 12 13. cxlix. 5. 6.

PROVERBS.

108 i. 5. 6. ii. 2—5. 10. 11.
109 iii. 17. 18. 21—24. iv. 12.
110 vi. 6—11. xxi. 25. xiii. 23. xxiv. 30—32.
111 viii. 1. 14. 15. 20. 21.
112 ix. 1—6.
113 ix. 24. 28—30.
114 xi. 4. 8. 18. 24. 28.
115 xii. 9. 11. 21. 23. 7.

OVERBS.
xiv. 6. 9. 12. 16.
27. 32.
25. 27. 29. 33.
3. 7.
.8. 19. 32.
. 17. xix. 11. xx.
29. 31.
4. xxviii. 17. 18.
. 23. 29. xxv. 28.
. 27. xxviii. 25.
23. xxx. 2.
. 21. 22. 27.
. Eccl. x. 8.
35. 26. xxx. 5.
ESIASTES.
3.
. ii. 2.
. ix. 10.
—14.
16. 18. x. 3.
7. xi. 9.
ON'S SONG.
iv. 16. v. 1.
. vi. 10.
. vi. 4.
-7.
AIAH.
11. 14—16. 18.
11. 12. iii. 16. 21.
3. 14. 20. 21. 23.
13. 16. Jer. ii. 30.
. 9.
3. 5. 6.
—9.
. 10. 12. 16.
15. xxix. 15.
16. 18. 19.
. 19. xxxi. 5.
. 15. 17.
3.
18. xlii. 15. 16.
3. 7. 16.

PAGE

ISAIAH.

155 xliii. 4. 5. 13. 16. 19.
156 xliv. 2—5.
157 xlv. 6—8. 22.
158 xlvi. 8. xlviii. 8—11.
159 xlix. 13. 17. 23.
160 l. 10. li. 6. 12. 16.
161 liii. 6. 11. 12.
162 lviii. 2. lix. 1. 2.
163 lxii. 6. 7.
164 lxv. 13. 23. lxvi. 2.

JEREMIAH.

165 ii. 19. 33. 35. iii. 12. 13.
166 iii. 14. iv. 1. 4. 14. v. 3.
167 v. 1.
168 v. 3. 12. vi. 13. 14.
169 ix. 23. 24.
170 x. 6. 7. 23.
171 xiii. 22. xiv. 7. 9. 19—21.
172 xv. 19. 20.
173 xvi. 5. 12. 17. xvii. 1. xviii. 11. 12.
174 xvii. 5. 7. 8.
175 xxii. 13.
176 xxiv. 7.
177 xxxi. 33. 34.
178 xxxii. 39—41.
179 xxxviii. 4. xliv. 10. xlix. 16. xlvii. 6. 7.

LAMENTATIONS.

180 iii. 37—42.

EZEKIEL.

181 ii. 6. iii. 17. 18.
182 viii. 3. 12. 13. 18. ix. 4. 6.
183 xii. 22. 23. 25.
184 xvi. 6. 9. 10. 14. 15.
185 xvi. 49—51. 60. 61. 63.
186 xviii. 20. 21. 24. 31. 32.
187 xx. 18. 19. 21. 25.
188 xxiv. 12. 13. xxviii. 3. 4. 17.
189 xxxiv. 2. 4. 10. 23.
190 xxxvi. 25—27.

PAGE

DANIEL.

191 ii. 17—21.
192 iv. 17. 34.
193 ix. 8. 9. 13. 18. 19.
194 xii. 2. 3. 10.

HOSEA.

195 v. 15. vi. 1. 2.
196 vii. 14. 16. viii. 3. 12. ix. 12.
197 xi. 7—9.
198 xii. 6. 8. xiii. 9. 12.
199 xiv. 1—4.

JOEL.

200 ii. 13. 14.

AMOS.

201 v. 14. 15. 21. 23.
202 viii. 11. ix. 8. 9.

OBADIAH.

203 3. 4. 7.

JONAH.

204 ii. 2. 3. 7.
205 iii. 10.

MICAH.

206 v. 4. 9. vii. 11.
207 vi. 8. vii. 2. 4.

NAHUM.

208 i. 3. 7. 8.

HABAKKUK.

209 i. 12. ii. 4.

ZEPHANIAH.

210 i. 12. ii. 3.

HAGGAI.

211 i. 12. 13. ii. 4. 5. 7. 19.

ZECHARIAH.

212 ii. 5. 8. 10.
213 iii. 7—9. vi. 12.
214 iv. 6. 7. 10.
215 ix. 8. 17. 10. 12.
216 xii. 8. x. xiii. 1. xiv. 9.
217 xi. 15. 17.

MALACHI.

218 iii. 16—18.

JUDITH.

219 ix. 6, 11. 12. 14.

PAGE

WISDOM.

220 i. 3. 6. 10. 11.
221 ii. 11. 12. 15. 16.
222 iv. 1—9.
223 vii. 30. ix. 4. 10. 17. 18.
224 xi. 20. 23. 24. 26. xii. 2.
225 xii. 15. 18. 20—22.
226 xv. 1—3.

TOBIT.

227 xiii. 1. 2. 5. 14. 15.
228 iv. 5. 7. 15. 19. 21.
229 xiii. 5. 6.

ECCLUS.

230 ii. 1—3. 8—11.
231 iii. 18. 20. 21. 24. 26. 28.
232 iv. 14. 15. 17. 18. 28.
233 v. 4. 7. vii. 16.
234 xiv. 21. xv. 6—10.
235 xvii. 29. xviii. 14. 21—24. 29.
236 xix. 24. xxi. 11. xxii. 16. xxiii. 27.
237 xxxii. 14. 15. 17.
238 xxxii. 24. xxxiv. 10. 11. 13. 14.
239 xxxv. 15—17.
240 li. 13. 14. 19. 20.

BARUCH.

241 iii. 10. 12. 13. iv. 21. 22. 25.

MACCABEES.

242 ii. 61. iii. 18. 19. 20.
243 iv. 17. v. 14. 15.

MATTHEW.

244 i. 23.
245 iii. 2. 7—10.
246 iv. 17.
247 v. 4.
248 v. 6.
249 v. 5. 7—10.
250 v. 13. 14. 16.
251 v. 20. vii. 15. 21.
252 vii. 11. 12.
253 x. 22. 29—31. xi. 12.
254 xv. 8. 9. 19. xvi. 6.



	PAGE
TTHEW.	ROMANS.
Luke xxii. 32.	295 i. 16. ii. 4. 28.
7. 8.	296 iii. 12. 27. 28. iv. 7, 8.
). xxi. 22.	297 iv. 17—22.
. 42. 44. xxv. 10.	298 v. 3—5.
—34. 41.	299 vi. 3. 4.
ARK.	300 vii. 4. viii. 12.
5.	301 vii. 15. 16. 26.
i. 22—24.	302 x. 3. 10. 11. xi. 32.
34. 36. xv. 34.	303 xii. 10—12. 14. 16. 18. xiii. 8. 13.
UKE.	304 xiv. 1. 7, 8. 12. 16.
1.	305 xv. 4. 5. 13.
3. 26.	1 CORINTHIANS.
22.	306 i. 9. 7, 8.
	307 ii. 14. iii. 19. iv. 10.
xxiii. 34. 43. 46.	308 v. 7. vi. 12. 19. vii. 29.
. 36.	309 ix. 26, 27. x. 6. 7.
OHN.	310 x. 32. 33. xi. 1.
15. 36.	311 xi. 30—32.
4.	312 xii. 3, 4. 31.
	313 xv. 25. 58. xvi. 13.
. 29. 44.	2 CORINTHIANS.
8. 51. 54. 56. 68.	314 i. 3, 4. 10.
47—49.	315 ii. 14. iii. 4, 5. iv. 8. 9.
6. 39, 40.	316 v. 5—7. vi. 1.
n. ix. 23. 25.	317 vii. 9. 10.
46—48.	318 vii. 9. 14. ix. 6. 7.
15. xv. 3.	319 xi. 2, 3.
14. xvi. 23. 24.	320 xii. 9. 10. xiii. 11.
xvii. 15. 16. 26.	GALATIANS.
26. 28. 30.	321 ii. 19, 20. iii. 24. 26—28.
17	322 v. 18. 23. vi. 15. 16.
29..	EPHESIANS.
-19.	323 i. 16. 18.
ACTS.	324 iii. 14—16. 21.
8.	325 iv. 15. 16. v. 1. 2.
v. 12.	326 v. 30.
. 2. 4.	327 vi. 8. 11—18.
0. 12.	PHILIPPIANS.
31.	328 i. 21. iii. 7—10.
6. 28.	329 i. 27. ii. 15. iii. 18—20.
31. 33.	COLOSSIANS.
. xxvi. 22.	330 i. 12. 27. ii. 6. 8.
, 18.	331 iii. 16. Eph. v. 20.



334	ii. 16, 17. iii. 3. 5.	355
	1 TIMOTHY.	
335	i. 5—7. 18. 19.	356
336	iii. 16. iv. 7—9.	357
337	vi. 3—5. 2 Tim. iii. 9.	358
338	vi. 6—12.	359
	2 TIMOTHY.	360
339	i, 12. 13. 1 Tim. vi. 12.	361
340	iii. 15—17. iv. 2. 3. 5.	362
341	iv. 7. 8. 18.	363
	TITUS.	364
342	i. 16. ii. 1. 7. 8.	365
343	iii. 1—8.	
344	iii. 14. Phile. 4. 6.	366
	1 PETER.	367
345	i. 3—5.	368
346	ii. 9. 15. 20, 21.	369
347	iii. 14—16. iv. 4.	
348	iv. 12. 13. 16—18.	370
349	v. 8. 10.	371
	2 PETER.	372
350	i. 5—7.	373
351	ii. 9, iii. 9—12.	2(
	1 JOHN.	374
352	i. 9. ii. 28. iii. 1.	375



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